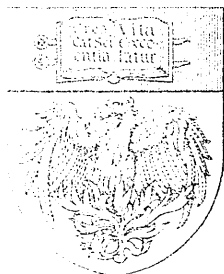


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BAPTISM,

A DIVINE INSTITUTION,

AND WORTHY

THE

SERIOUS REGARD OF ALL

WHO REVERENCE

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

BY SAMUEL W. LYND,

PASTOR OF THE SIXTH-STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

OF CINCINNATI.

**“Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.
He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he
that believeth not shall be damned.”**

Mark 16: 15, 16.

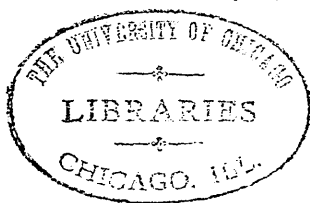
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BAPTISM.

THE following pages on the subject of Baptism, are presented to the public without apology. The reasons which have induced the publication are many, and to the writer's mind, conclusive. He lays no claim to originality, but has freely drawn upon all sources of information within his reach. The intelligent reader will, however, perceive that it is not a mere compilation. And if assurance can give any satisfaction, he can assure the public that this production is the result of a frequent, deliberate, and prayerful examination of the subject, for many years. Many of the illustrations and facts, are taken entire, from essays published by him, a few years since, in a Religious Periodical. The work partakes both of the critical and the popular character, and is designed to meet the various publications on the other side, either by direct argument and illustration, or by anticipation.

The writer disavows any intention to wound the feelings of those who differ from him. He has no ecclesiastical establishment to support; no system of proselyting in view; but his main object is to see in all the Churches a reformation to primitive practice. To those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, he *dedicates* these pages, and to the Eternal God he *commits* them, with a prayer for his blessing.

The sentiment of the Apostle Paul, is appropriate to our subject. "*Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;*" *persuaded*, not because others adopt a particular form, but *upon testimony*, and *that*, the testimony of inspiration. We are to call no man *master*. Jesus Christ is our Lord, and his word is the rule of our faith and practice. The translators of our Bible have not translated the word which is applied to the ordinance of Baptism, but simply, given it an English termination, allowing the people generally, the privilege of guessing what it means, or of depending upon their learned teachers for the knowledge of performing their duty aright. The word (*Baptizo*) which is used in reference to the ordinance, *never*, either in sacred or profane authors, means, to *sprinkle*. To express the different sprinklings under the law, a different term is employed. And if sprinkling had been intended, the term appropriated to that use, could have been employed.

The first account which we have of this Institution, occurs in the 3d chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew, and relates to the *baptism of John*. "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan. And were baptized of him *in* Jordan, confessing their sins."—Matt. 3: 1, 2, 5, 6.

Consider, in the first place, the subjects of John's baptism. Infants were not included in the number. Mark the phraseology, "Then *went out* to him;" it was their own act. Infants would have been *brought*, and the appropriate language to communicate that fact would have been employed; as in the case of the children who were *brought* to Christ, that he might bless them. Parents were not required to have this rite performed upon their children; and all who received baptism of John, were obviously capable of repentance, and did actually profess repentance. Those who did not were rejected. "When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore *fruits meet for repentance*." It appears then, that John preached the doctrine of repentance to the people, the power of God attended his preaching to their hearts, and they were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. They were instructed to believe on him who should come, that is on Christ. Here every plain reader perceives that infants were excluded from the baptism of John, because they could neither repent nor believe.

Consider, in the second place, the manner in which John baptized his candidates. "They were baptized of him in Jordan." In a subsequent verse, he says "I indeed baptize you with water &c."—and "he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire."

Dr. George Campbell of Aberdeen, renders it, "*in water*,"—"in the Holy Spirit and fire." Speaking of Protestant translators, he says, "None of them have scrupled to render *En to Iordane* in the sixth verse, "*in Jordan*," though nothing can be plainer, than that if there be any incongruity in the expression *in water*, this, "*in Jordan*," must be equally incongruous. But they have seen that the preposition *in* could not be avoided there, without adopting a circumlocution, and

saying, *with the water of Jordan*, which would have made their deviation from the text too glaring. It is to be regretted that we have so much evidence, that even good and learned men, allow their judgments to be warped by the sentiments and customs of the sect which they prefer. The true partizan, of whatever denomination, always inclines to correct the diction of the spirit, by that of the party."

Mr. Hervey, when contending that *en* signifies *in*, adds, I can prove it to have been in peaceable possession of this signification for more than *two thousand years*. "Every one knows" he observes in another place, "that *with* is not the native, obvious, and literal meaning; rather a meaning swayed, influenced, moulded by the preceding or following word."

Letters to Mr. Wesley, Let. II. and X.

In four of the first versions of the Bible into English, we find these words rendered literally "*in water*;" but the expression not suiting the prevailing custom, it was afterwards rendered *with water*. It is *in*, in the Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic, and several more modern versions.—Vide Pædo. Exam. V. I. p. 103.

The baptism of Christ occurs in the connexion, and from the circumstance that *He came up out of the water*, we infer that he must have gone *into* it. But what did he do *in* the water? If the word (Baptizo) meant *sprinkling*, we should know that he went into the water to be *sprinkled*—but if it mean *to immerse*—he must have gone *into* the water for the purpose of being *immersed*. And besides, it is far more rational that he should have gone into the water to be *immersed*, than that he should have entered the water, simply to be *sprinkled*. The word means *to immerse*, but never, *to sprinkle*. If this can be supported, the circumstances of baptism are altogether in our favour. Some have tried to represent the Jordan as a small stream, insufficient for the purpose of immersion. But this is a mistake. Jordan was subject to two kinds of flood. One was periodical at Harvest time, when it resembled the Nile in Egypt; the other was casual, and resembled the swellings of all rivers in hilly countries. Dr. Gill has shown, that, according to the Jewish writers, Jordan was a river to swim in, and navigable. Modern travellers confirm this statement. These authorities must be disproved before it can be shown that the Jordan was insufficient for the purpose of immersion, and until they are dis-

proved, which will not occur very soon, we take the liberty to view the fact of this river's selection, as confirming the Baptist view of the ordinance. Why was a river chosen, if the ordinance was not administered by immersion?

Again, we read that John was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, "*because there was much water there.*" Here, the reason why he baptizes in Enon is, because of the quantity of the water there. Translate the word *sprinkling*, "*sprinkling in Enon, because there was much water there.*" It would not take more than two gallons of water, to sprinkle one thousand persons. There being *much water* in the place, could not be the reason why he sprinkled the people there. Some who oppose immersion, say that this text should read "*many waters,*" and then they infer that it means waters divided into many little rills, which might all answer for sprinkling, but not for immersion. Then why go to *many* little rills? Would not *one little rill* have been sufficient? To admit this translation would be nothing in favour of sprinkling. The phrase [*Hudata polla*] rendered "*much water,*" is a Hebraism. The Hebrew noun for waters is in the dual number, but never used in the singular, and hence is always associated with a plural adjective. The Greek version has it sometimes *Hudor*, and sometimes [*Hudata.*] In the 3d chapter of Joshua, both forms are used in reference to the same river. The Hebrew phrase is not used to signify "*small streams.*" See Ps. 77: 19. Ez. 43: 2. Ps. 18: 16.

The Greek phrase never means *small streams* in the New Testament. The following are all the places in which it occurs. Rev. 1: 15. His voice as the sound of *many waters.*" Compare this with Ez. 43: 2. Rev. 14: 2. "And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of *many waters*, and as the voice of a great thunder." Rev. 17: 1. I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore, that sitteth upon *many waters.*" This in a subsequent verse, is illustrated.—"The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."—Rev. 19: 6. "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of *many waters.*" The only reason which can possibly be assigned, why this phrase should be changed from its usual meaning, is, that if it be not so changed, it will stand in favour of the Baptists.—Then let it stand in their favour. It is a manifest violation

of the principle, that every word must be used in its ordinary sense, unless there be something in the connexion or the nature of the case, to authorize a change, to say, that this phrase in Matthew, does not mean water in *considerable quantity*. It does. * And since the *quantity* is assigned as the reason why John baptized in Enon, and the word itself signifies *immersion*, we infer that those who came to him were immersed in that stream.

A sermon which was published some years ago by Dr. Wilson, has been, and still is, circulating in this city and through the country. The object of this discourse, is to prove that *baptism* is *sprinkling*, and that *infants* are entitled to this ordinance. I had often heard it spoken of, but never took the trouble to procure it, presuming that it was similar to all the productions on this side of the question. Lately, it has been sent to me through the Post-Office, and I have gratified myself *exceedingly* in reading it. The author of this sermon asks the question, with great apparent confidence, "Do they discover immersion in John's baptism? No, for John baptized *with* water, analagous to baptizing *with* the Holy Ghost." But we have shown that John baptized *in* water, *in* the Jordan—and what is this proposition *with* made emphatic for, but to have a pretty little play upon the word. Those who are acquainted with the accommodated use of terms, know, that baptizing *in* the Holy Spirit, is a suitable expression to convey the idea intended;—but more of this before we have done.

"John baptized (he says) to fulfil *all righteousness*," and then asks the question, "What did righteousness require? A priest was set apart to his office by washing with water.—What was the mode of washing? By sprinkling the water upon the subjects."

But need any person be told that this passage "*to fulfil all righteousness*" means, *to fulfil every righteous ordinance*. And if John received this rite from Heaven as will be presently shown, was it not a righteous ordinance? What has the observance of this institution to do with something that transpired under the Jewish law? Were all John's followers, Priests, and initiated by baptism into their office?

The author says if John *immersed* Christ, he was so far from fulfilling *all* righteousness, that he was evidently a transgressor of the law of God." Now if his application of this

ordinance be true, John was a transgressor of the law at any rate, for if he had even sprinkled Christ according to the plan of inducting the Levites into their office, he would have fulfilled but a part of *all* righteousness.

Read the righteous law on this subject. (*Numb. 8: 7, 8.*) "And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, (i. e. by dipping,) and so make themselves clean." Now, I would ask—*Did Christ shave his flesh all over, and then wash his clothes, and afterwards bring his offerings as prescribed in that law? Does a part equal the whole?* And if he did no more than the sprinkling part of that law, how did he fulfil *all* righteousness? We must have another book to illustrate this.

But is this argument perfectly *ingenuous*? The word *Baptizo*, means *to immerse*—one of its modifications is, *to wash*, in which the primitive meaning of *immersing* or *dipping* is still retained. Now, Dr. W——, takes the modification *to wash*, and says—"*A priest was set apart to his office, by washing with water.*" This is not strictly the fact.—From the law just quoted, and the very law to which he has referred us, we learn that the Levites were initiated—

1. By having water sprinkled upon them—
2. By shaving their bodies—and,
3. By washing their clothes, which must have been done by dipping them.

He then asks the question, "What was the mode of washing?"—and replies, "By *sprinkling* the water upon the subjects". Now the washing and the sprinkling were two distinct things, and both were performed upon the subjects—sprinkling was no more a modification of washing, than washing is a modification of sprinkling. *Washing* is never intended by *sprinklings* under the law—nor are *sprinklings* intended in the directions *to wash*.

He observes again—"John either baptized with water in the mode of *aspersion*, or he contradicted the Three that bear witness in earth;" alluding to a passage in the 1st Epistle of John, and the 5th chapter. In the explanation of these witnesses, he says, "God's three witnesses in earth, are in perfect harmony. They agree in one. One *fact* and one *mode* of testifying to that *fact*. The *fact* is *purification*, the *mode*, *sprinkling*." Now if the *fact* to which these testify is *purifi-*

ation, then language can be made to speak any thing. It could be shown just as readily, that *circumcision* was the *fact*, and a *sharp stone*, the *mode* of doing it.

The Apostle John says, "This is he that came by water, and by blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the spirit that beareth witness, because the spirit is truth." The spirit bore witness to the fact, that Jesus Christ was the Son of God; both by water, and by blood—both at his *baptism*, and *his death and resurrection*.

John the Baptist says "That he should be *made manifest* to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing *in water*." When Jesus was baptized and came up out of the water, he was *manifested* to Israel, as the *Son of God*, for the Holy Spirit descended like a dove, and bore his testimony, while the voice from heaven proclaimed—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." In his death the same manifestation was given. The retiring sun, the rent veil, the bursting rocks, all attested his divine mission, and the spirit, through his resurrection, completed the testimony;—for, he was declared to be the Son of God with power, by his resurrection from the dead. In this verse, the testimony, (*Marturoun*), is used as the participle of the imperfect tense, and shows that the actions were past and finished. The same witnesses are used in another sense in the 8th verse, where the word is employed as the present participle to denote a continued testimony.

"There are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one."—There are three then who bear continued testimony to something. What is it? The Apostle proceeds; "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son, hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." Now what is this testimony, or, in other words, this record that God hath given concerning his Son, and the proof of which every believer has in his own experience? The Apostle answers directly, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Here *the witnesses testify to the truth, that we have eternal life in Christ, and they agree in their testimony*.

1. The *spirit* testifies to this truth, in the words which he has himself dictated, in which this doctrine is made known:—and in his sanctifying influences by which this truth is realized in the experience of the believer.

2. *The water*, i. e. the ordinance of immersion has a direct reference to the resurrection of Christ, and emblematically represents our own resurrection. Its continued administration in the Church, reminds us of the fact, that we have eternal life in the Son of God. Hence Paul says, “We are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For, if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”

3. *The blood*, i. e. the commemoration of the shedding of Christ’s blood, which is constantly made in the Lord’s supper, is a witness to the end of the world, that we have eternal life through him.

Dr. Doddridge, Dr. Adam Clark, and McKnight, give substantially this view of the passage.

The same writer observes, “If John immersed Christ, or any one else, and thereby established an exclusive mode of baptism, which we are bound to adopt, then baptism in many places, where the gospel must be preached, is perfectly impracticable. But the Lord Jesus could never approve of such absurdity; for wherever men can live, the gospel can be preached, and wherever the gospel is preached and believed, its ordinances can be administered.”

But this objection to immersion, contains its own answer. “*Wherever men can live, the gospel can be preached.*” And, pray, can men live where there is no water for themselves, and their cattle? There is not a spot on earth, where men can live, but water can be procured in sufficient quantity for the purpose of immersing.

Let us consider, in the third place, the origin of John’s baptism—“*Was it from Heaven, or of men?*” It is said that the Jews had a method of baptizing among them, before John came, called the baptism of proselytes, and that John took up this custom, and continued it; and this is assigned by some, as a reason why the New Testament is silent respecting infant sprinkling. But there is strong presumptive proof that this is an error,

1. The crowds assembled at the place where John was baptizing, in connection with the singularity of his manners, induced the Sanhedrim to send to him, a deputation of their most respectable characters, even the Priests and Levites, to ask him, "Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not, but confessed, I am not the Christ.—Art thou Elias, and he answered I am not."—They then demanded of him, why he baptized. Certainly these questions and replies do not prove that the baptism of proselytes was then in existence, or that John's baptism was merely a continuation of proselyte baptism. They do not even imply it; for it is well known that the Pharisees professed great respect for the Prophets. Now had John intimated, that he was personally Elijah, or the Messiah, it is highly probable that they would have been satisfied with the authority of either, to institute a new ceremony.

2. There is no proof that proselyte baptism was in use among the Jews, when John appeared. It certainly was not a part of the law of God.—(See Ex. 12: 48, 49.) If the elders made an addition to the divine law, without the sanction of the ruler of the universe, and proselyte baptism was that addition, practised at the time when John appeared, proselyte baptism was an *unrighteous ordinance*; and yet Jesus Christ declares, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Consequently, the baptism of John could not have been a continuation of proselyte baptism.

3. This baptism depends upon the *Talmuds* for proof: works written several centuries after the time of John.

4. If the baptism of John were not extraordinary, why did the Jews doubt his authority, and why were they confounded, when asked the simple question;—"The baptism of John, whence was it, from Heaven or of men."—They reasoned thus, "If we shall say *from Heaven*, he will reply, why then did you not believe him? If we shall say *of men*, we fear the people, for all hold John as a prophet." Were the baptism of John a continuation of proselyte baptism, they could have answered the question without hesitation, and fearless of the people, who must have known that it was *of men*.

The Baptism of John then was *from Heaven*.—We may establish this from his own words, "*He that sent me to baptize in water.*" Who sent him? "*There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.*" As he was commissioned of God to

this work, we conclude it was from Heaven.—Our Lord says “The Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the *counsel* of God against themselves, not being baptized with the baptism of John.” His baptism therefore, originated, in the counsel, in the wise determination of Jehovah, and, of course, was from heaven. Let no man despise that which heaven has enjoined: let no man substitute traditions in the place of divine authority, lest a jealous God reprove him and say, “*Who hath required this at your hands?*”

The testimony which the spirit and the voice from heaven bore to Christ at his baptism, is a striking confirmation of the divine original of this institution. The baptism of John was perpetuated by the command of the Saviour, to the end of the world, “*Go teach* all nations, baptizing them &c., and hence we infer the divine authority of this Institution.”

The writer to whom I have already referred, says, “In looking at the testimony of the spirit, and the water and the blood, I could never imagine, how they first invented the idea of immersion.” Shut a man up in a room of a moon-light night, and tell him to look at the Coal-grate; do you suppose that he will see the moon there? Certainly not:—but why not? Because he looks in the wrong place. So we may look at the three witnesses, till heart and flesh fail, and we shall not discover how the idea of *immersion* was first invented. It is more than hinted that the *Baptists* invented the idea of immersion. But no, sir, the Baptists took it as they found it. It was invented by the Almighty, and first practised by John, the forerunner of our Lord. And if you will condescend to turn away your eyes from those three witnesses, we will show you the grounds of our belief. Look, sir, at the Lexicons of the Greek language. Dr. Gill, whose advantages were far superior to ours, says, “I have consulted several Lexicons, as those of *Suidas*, *Scapula*, *Hadrian*, *Junius*, *Pasor*, as also another made by *Budeus*, *Tusanus*, *Gesner*, *Junius*, *Constantine*, *Hartung*, *Hopper*, and *Xylander*, who all unanimously render the word by *Mergo*, *immergo*, to *plunge* or *dip into*: And though they afterwards add also, *abluo*, *Lavo*, to *wash*, yet it is plain they mean such a washing, as is by dipping; and we are very willing to grant it, for we know there can be no dipping without washing; but had they meant a washing by pouring or sprinkling, they would have rendered it by *perfun-do*, or *Aspergo*, to *pour upon*, or *sprinkle*; but this, they never do.”

It would be passing strange if all the Lexicographers were mistaken in the definition which they have given. The word *plunge* does not more definitely express the idea of *immersing*, than does the Greek word (*Baptizo*.) We *plunge* our candidates into the water, and this we call baptizing them. Will any one contend that we do not put the whole body under water, because, the word *plunge* does not always mean to immerse? A horse is said to *plunge* in certain motions—a person is said to be *plunged* into a ditch, when he may not be entirely covered with the filth—and a person may be plunged into deep distress. But in all this accommodated use of the word, the ordinary and literal meaning is most amply sustained. Let us try to substitute the word *sprinkle* in either of these examples. The horse *sprinkled* exceedingly and threw his rider. He was *sprinkled* into the ditch. He was *sprinkled* into deep distress. It does not make sense. Yet this is perfectly analagous to the reasoning of those, who say that (*Baptizo*) does not mean to *immerse*, because the word is sometimes used in a figurative or accommodated sense. But more of this in the order of passages which will illustrate the remark.

Again, Sir, look at these critics, all of your own faith and practice, as far as this ordinance is concerned, and some of the best and greatest men that ever lived.

Calvin. "The word [*Baptizo*,] signifies to immerse, and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church."

Beza. "Christ commanded us to be baptized, by which word it is certain *immersion* is signified."

Vitringa. "The act of baptizing is the *immersion* of believers *in* water. This expresses the force of the word."

Zanchius. "The proper signification of [*Baptizo*,] is to *immerse*, plunge under, or overwhelm in water."

Bossuet. "To baptize, signifies to *plunge*, as granted by all the world."

Venema. "The word to baptize, is no where used in the Scripture for sprinkling."

Dr. Wall. "This (*immersion*) is so plain and clear, by an infinite number of passages, that as we cannot but pity *the weak endeavours* of such Pedobaptists, as would maintain the negative of it, so also we ought to disown and show a dislike of the *profane scoffs* which some people give to the English Antipedobaptists," &c. &c.

Stillingfleet. "Rites and customs apostolical are *altered*, as *dipping* in baptism."

Mead. "There was *no such thing* as sprinkling used in baptism in the Apostles' days, nor many ages after them."

Salmasius. "Baptism is *immersion*."

Pool's Continuators. "To be baptized, is to be *dipped* in water."

Witsius. "It cannot be denied that the native signification of the word baptize is to *plunge*, or to *dip*."

Dr. Campbell. "The word baptize, both in sacred authors and in classical, signifies to *dip*, to *plunge*, to *immerse*, and was rendered by Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin fathers, *tingere*, the term used for dying cloth, which was by *immersion*. It is always construed suitably to this meaning."

The text in German, and in Dutch, the Danish catechism, the Syrians, the Armenians, the Persians, and all eastern Christians, employ the word in the sense of dipping.

But why did these great and good men, profess one thing and practice another? We cannot tell. They have not told us themselves. We leave their reasons with themselves. Perhaps some, who, at the present day, are dissatisfied with their sprinkling, and yet remain Pedobaptists can assign the reasons.

Again, Sir, look at *Ecclesiastical history*—Dr. Mosheim, describing the rites and ceremonies of the church in the first century, says: "The Sacrament of baptism was administered, in this century, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by the immersion of the whole body in the baptismal font." Writing of the 2d century, he uses this language, "The persons to be baptized, after they had repeated the creed, confessed and renounced their sins, and particularly, the devil and his pompous allurements, were immersed under water."

Tertullian says—"It is all one, whether we are washed in the sea, or in a pond; in a fountain or in a river; in a standing, or in a running water; nor is there any difference between those that John baptized in *Jordan*, and those that Peter baptized in the *Tiber*."

Gregory, in his ecclesiastical history, says, "Baptism was (in the first century) publicly performed by immersing the whole body in water."

Venema: "It is without controversy, that baptism in the

primitive church was administered by immersion into water, and not by sprinkling."

Dr. Sharp: "Whenever a person in *ancient times* was baptized, he was not only to profess his faith in Christ's death and resurrection, but he was also to look upon himself as obliged to mortify his former carnal affections, and so enter upon a new state of life; and the very *form* of baptism did lively represent this obligation. For what did his being *plunged under water* signify, but his undertaking, in imitation of Christ's death and burial, to forsake his former evil courses, as his *ascending out of the water*, did his engagement to lead a holy, spiritual life."

Wolfius: "That baptismal *immersion* was practiced in the first ages of the Christian church, many have shown from the writings of the ancients."

Calvin: "Here we perceive how baptism was administered among the ancients; for they immersed the whole body in water. Now it is the prevailing practice for a minister only to sprinkle the body or the head."

Wesley: "Buried with him alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion."

Bishop Taylor: "The custom of the ancient churches was not sprinkling, but immersion."

"Curcelloeus. "Baptism was performed by plunging the whole body into water, and not by sprinkling a few drops, as is now the practice. Nor did the disciples that were sent out by Christ, administer baptism afterwards, *in any other way*."

Whitby: "Immersion was religiously observed by all Christians for thirteen centuries."

These were all *Pedobaptists*, in practice, but *Baptists* in principle; and their testimony is of great value in the decision of the question before us.

While upon the ancient practice of baptizing, we think it not unimportant to show what was the decided judgment of the first English reformers, from which it will be apparent that the church of England preferred immersion to sprinkling. We are indebted to the Rev. Dr. Ryland for the following account, which may be found in the preface to his "*Candid Statement*," "In the library at Bristol, we have a copy of *THE booke of the common prayer and administration of the sacramentes and ceremonies of the church after the use of the*

churche of England, A. D. 1549." Trine immersion is here justified in the following words: "Then the prieste shall take the childe in his handes, and ask his name: and namyng the childe, shall dippe it in the water thryse. First, dipping the right side: seconde, the left side: the thirde time dyp-pynge the face towards the fonte: so it be discreetly and warely done, saying" &c.

Several allusions also are found in this book, to the primitive practice of immersing, upon which the Dr. has the following remarks—"I cannot help expressing my astonishment, at the increasing reluctance of our modern Paidobaptists to admit, that *immersion* was the original practice, and continued so to be for many centuries after the introduction of infant baptism; and was also considered, as far more significant than *pouring*, which alteration, occasioned by an inordinate stress being laid on the ordinance as *necessary* and *efficacious* for the forgiveness of sin, has in far later times been changed into bare *sprinkling*."

The first example of sprinkling is that of Novatian, which occurred about the middle of the third century. Eusebius says "He received baptism, being besprinkled with water on the bed where he lay, *if that can be called baptism*." But why doubt? Why suggest by this language, that it was *improperly* called baptism?—So imperfect was this baptism, that a person who had received sprinkling or pouring, could not be admitted to holy orders.

The first one who pleads for this practice among the ancients, is Cyprian, bishop of Carthage. He does not attempt to justify it, on the basis of Apostolic practice; but simply because he thought that divine favours were not capable of diminution or injury, and that nothing less than the full blessing could be enjoyed, where the Divine bounty is received, with a full and perfect faith, both of the giver and receiver. Errors had at this time, gained considerable standing in the church, for this very Bishop in his writings contends for the *consecration of the baptismal water, the exorcising of the devil, and the use of anointing in baptism*. We envy not those who plead sprinkling from *such authority*. At this early period, the idea obtained that baptism was the sign of forgiveness, and hence, multitudes, unwilling to die without the remission of their sins, were desirous of being baptized. In cases of extreme illness, they sent to Cyprian, to know whether a *lit-*

the water, would not answer as well as the immersion of the whole body. *Merciful man!* and already attached to rites which all Protestants of the present age discard, we are not surprised to learn that he allowed a substitution; but even in this, he was not quite sure, for he added in his instructions "Nevertheless, if they happen to be restored to health again, let them be had to the river, and there be dipped."

Sprinkling once sanctioned by a Bishop, soon gained ground and became common in Africa, in all cases of *necessity*. Pouring was first established in Europe, by Pope Stephen the 3d, in the beginning of the eighth century—and this only in cases of *necessity*. The council of Ravenna, declared sprinkling or immersion indifferent, about the beginning of the fourteenth century. In England, during the reign of Edward VI. immersion was the common practice, except in cases of *weakness*. Dr. Wall assigns the reason why, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, dipping was laid aside: He says: "It being allowed to weak children to be baptized by affusion, many fond ladies and gentlewomen first, and then by degrees the common people, would obtain the favour of the priest to have their children pass for *weak* children, too tender to endure dipping in the water."

Thus we have seen that when the counsel and practices of Jesus Christ and his Apostles were followed, baptism was immersion; but that as soon as errors obtained in the church, and the bishops, leaving the pure commandments of God, began to enjoin their own superstitions, baptism in cases of *necessity* was *sprinkling* or *pouring*. Let the impartial reader judge.

Look once more.—Here is the Greek church. From the first period of their embracing christianity, down to the present day, they have practised *immersion*. And however erroneous, many of their *opinions* may be, yet they are authority in a case of language, which is native to them, and especially in reference to a word which universal and constant practice for ages among them, has sanctioned. Dr. Wall, says: "All the nations of christians, that do now, or formerly did submit to the authority of the Bishop of Rome, do ordinarily baptise their infants by pouring or sprinkling; and though the English received not this custom till after the decay of popery, yet they have received it from such neighboring nations as had begun it in the times of the Pope's power: but all other christians in the world, who never owned the Pope's usurped

power, do and ever did dip their infants in the ordinary use. And if we take the divisions of the world from the three main parts of it, all the christians in Asia, all in Africa, and about one third part of Europe, are of the last sort, (*who baptize by dipping,*) in which third part of Europe, are comprehended the christians of Græcia, Thracia, Servia, Bulgaria, Rascia, Walachia, Moldavia, Russia, Nigra, &c., and even the Muscovites, who, if coldness of the country will excuse, might plead for a dispensation with the most reason of any."

Look at these ancient Monuments: Baptisteries, or places for baptism, were built in ancient times, all over the christian world. They were large buildings, having in the centre a commodious bath of water, into which persons descended by a flight of steps. There is at the present time, in one of the churches of Rome, a bath of this description capable of accommodating two persons, in which, according to tradition, Constantine the Great was immersed. If the ancient custom were sprinkling, why these buildings? And how shall we account for the fact that as sprinkling gained ground, *little fonts* or *basins* were substituted?—

Can any one conceive *now*, how immersion was first invented? The author of the sermon, still asks the question—"Do they find *immersion* in the meaning of the term *baptism*?" We have shown this by Lexicons and Critics, and primitive practice. Certainly, we find it in the meaning of the term,—but he replies, "No, for we read in the Septuagint that the *body* of Nebuchadnezzar was *baptized* with the dew of heaven. And in the Greek Testament we read—*when they came from the market, except they baptize they eat not, and, the baptism of beds or couches.*"

Let us examine whether the ground which is taken in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, to supply the meaning of the word is a legitimate one, according to well-known principles of language. Words are variously employed in every language.—They have an ordinary sense, such as is established by common use, and an accommodated sense, in which nothing is preserved but the analogy to the meaning of the word, and that analogy must always be apparent, otherwise its use is perfect jargon. We have a common rule in the interpretation of language which should never be thrown out of sight in the discussion of this subject. The rule is this:—Every word should be taken in its primitive or ordinary signification, un-

less there be something in the connexion, or in the nature of the case to authorize a change. Now we have shown that the word primarily and ordinarily signifies to *immerse*, to *dip*, or to *plunge*. And this point is conceded by the first Greek scholars our world has produced. The word [*Baptizo*,] which is the one used in reference to the ordinance, occurs twice in the Septuagint.

2 Kings 5: 14. "Then went he down and *dipped* himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God." What did the man of God command? That he should wash or bathe, [*Lousai*,] the proper word for washing the whole body, in distinction to the washing of the hands &c. Besides the Hebrew word [*Tabal*] is rendered dipping, I believe without a single exception.

The other example is found in Isaiah 21st chapter 4th verse. "Fearfulness affrighted me." This is by the seventy rendered "*Iniquity baptizes me*."—But how? By immersing, by sprinkling, by pouring, by cleansing, by washing?—Iniquity is not something tangible, like water, into which you can plunge a person. You cannot pour or sprinkle iniquity on him. No, the very nature of the case shows that the word is accommodated. Yet, how striking the analogy to the Meaning of the word is kept up. "*Iniquity overwhelms me*." That this is the meaning any one may be convinced who will read the connexion. But when he has done so, let him substitute *sprinkling*, and read it, "*Iniquity sprinkles me*, and he will find it has no meaning." Twice the word occurs in the Apocryphal writings. *Judith* 12: 8. "She washed, [i. e. she bathed herself] in a fountain." This needs no explanation.

Ecclesiasticus 34: 30. "He that washeth himself [*Baptizomenos*] from a dead body." This washing was by dipping. See the law on this subject, [*Numb.* 19: 19.] Hence it is obvious that this word in the Greek version of the Old Testament, in its proper or ordinary signification, means *immersion*, but never, *sprinkling*.

But to return a moment to the case of Nebuchadnezzar, It may be proper to state that the word [*Bapto*] which is employed in his case, is not the word used in reference to the ordinance of baptism, and hence, we might take advantage of this fact, and throw the example away, as irrelevant to the case. We do say that it cannot *prove* or *disprove* the meaning of [*Baptizo*.] The meaning of both words is ascertained

by their use. We believe they are synonymous, and this writer Dr. W—— grants the same, or he never would have admitted Nebuchadnezzar into the list of witnesses. With the exception of this single case, the word [*Bapto*] occurs fifteen times in the Septuagint, and always means *dipping* or *immersing*. As a person could not be plunged into that which came down upon him from above, the word in Nebuchadnezzar's case is evidently accommodated—but even in this sense, the ordinary meaning is seen by analogy, for it is well known that a person exposed to an Eastern dew for a single night, will be as thoroughly wet, as if he had been plunged into a stream.

That [*Baptizo*] is a derivative from [*Bapto*] is admitted, but that it has a less forcible sense than its primitive, may be safely denied. If primitives were always more forcible than their derivatives, then the point would be decided; but they sometimes express less: and that [*Baptizo*] is equally strong with [*Bapto*] the use of the word fully determines. Reasoning upon abstract philological principles is folly; the *usus loquendi* settles the controversy.

The word does not mean *to wash*, of which, *immersion* is a modification—but it means *to immerse*, *to plunge into*, and the word *to wash* is a mere modification of this meaning. By no mode of illustration can it be made appear, that *sprinkling* is a modification of the word. [*Raino* and *Rantizo*,] are the proper words for *sprinkling*, and the words that are used for the various *sprinklings* under the law.

The other part of the quotation deserves some notice—"In the Greek Testament we read, when they come from the market, except they baptize, they eat not, and the baptism of beds or couches."

The circumstances of the case are these. The Pharisees and certain of the scribes, when they saw the disciples of Christ eat bread with unwashed hands—found fault, and said "Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?" In the course of this narrative, the Evangelist himself informs us of three striking facts. 1. "For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash [*Nipsontai*,] their hands oft, eat not." 2. "And when they come from the market except they wash [*Baptisontai*,] they eat not." 3. "And many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the washing [*Baptis-*

mos] of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables." This record is found in the 7th chapter of Mark.

As the word without controversy means to immerse, why was it not so translated? Are we obliged now to form an argument upon the words of the translator? But had it been translated *immersion* in the above instances, would it have accorded with fact? By facts we must be guided, and not by the prejudiced views of the partizan.

Grotius, on this passage says, "They were more solicitous to cleanse themselves from the defilement they had contracted in the market, and therefore they not only washed their hands, but immersed their whole bodies." Dr. Gill, on this passage, has given a quotation from Maimonides, a Jewish writer, and who, it is presumable, knew something of their customs—"Washed in a laver, which holds forty seahs of water, which are not drawn, every defiled man *dips* himself, and in it they *dip* all unclean vessels, as cups, pots, &c." Scaliger says, "The more superstitious part of them, every day, before they sat down to meat, dipped the whole body." With respect to the washing of cups, pots, &c. &c., what was the fact?—The testimony of Maimonides is valuable. "Wherever in the law, washing of the flesh, or of the clothes, is mentioned, it means nothing else than the dipping of the whole body in a laver." Again: "A bed that is wholly defiled, if a man dips it, part by part, it is pure. A pillow or bolster of skin, he must dip them, and lift them up by their fringes." Scaliger, and the Misneh, agree in this, that the Jewish washings of the body, clothes, cups, tables, brazen vessels, beds &c., were always by immersion in water. Their tables, it will be remembered, were not like ours, but a kind of couches upon which they leaned at meals. It is perfect folly to reason against facts. These establish all that can be desired in the case; they show that the word, in its ordinary meaning, is to *immerse*.

Two examples more of [*Baptismos*] occur in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Hebrews 6: 2. "Of the doctrines of baptisms." Hebrews 9: 10. "Which stood only in meats, and drinks, and *divers washings*, [*Baptismois*] and carnal ordinances."

What are the facts in these cases? That divers immersions existed under the law is evident, from the following passages, to which the reader is referred. Leviticus 11: 32. 14: 6-8.

Numbers 31: 23. 19: 7, 19. It is moreover a fact, that the word [*Baptizo*] is *never* used to signify sprinkling—not an instance can be produced from the Septuagint, where this word is used of the various sprinklings under the law; and hence, it cannot be, as some suppose, that it is employed in the present case, in reference to those sprinklings; neither is it at all necessary. When it is said “*divers washings*,” Grotius observes, “it is called so, because of the different persons and things washed; and not because of different sorts of washings, for there is but one way of washing, and that is by *dipping*.” We repeat it, it is folly to reason against *facts*. Had the noun [*Baptismos*,] in the places to which our attention has been directed, received kind and proper treatment, it would have been translated *immersion*, and no difficulty would ever have originated.

Beza on this passage in Mark, says, that the word *baptize* signifies *to wash*, *only by consequence*, for it properly denotes to immerse for the sake of dyeing.

Dr. Gill observes that any old woman could explain the usual manner of washing vessels, which is not by *pouring* or *sprinkling* water on them, but by putting them into water.

This is the ordinary signification of [*Baptizo*] in Josephus, Plutarch, Strabo, Anacreon, Diodorus Siculus, Heliodorus, Aristotle, Lucian, and other writers.

When we look at this mass of testimony in favour of immersion, can we conceive how sprinkling was first invented? But we proceed to a plain investigation of several passages of scripture which belong to this range of subject.

The Eunuch had been to Jerusalem to worship, and was returning in his chariot, when the Spirit of the Lord said to Philip, “Go near and join thyself to this chariot.” He obeyed, and when he approached, he discovered that the Eunuch was reading a passage from the prophecies of Isaiah. He addressed him with the question “Understandest thou what thou readest?” The Eunuch confessed his ignorance and invited Philip to take a seat in his chariot. As they proceeded on their way, the Evangelist preached unto him Jesus.—At length they came to a certain water, and the Eunuch said, “See here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?” Philip said “If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest; And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot

to stand still; and they *went down both into the water* both Philip, and the Eunuch; and he baptized him."

Immersion being the ordinary signification of the word, what are we to conclude from the fact that *both went down into the water*, but that the Eunuch was immersed? And what do we conclude from the requisition of Philip "*If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest*," and the confession of the Eunuch "*I believe &c.*" but that those who profess faith in Christ are the only proper subjects of this ordinance?

To the meaning of the term, some object the case of the Jailor. They say it cannot be believed that in a city guarded by Roman sentinels, the prisoners Paul and Silas, when the Jailor had received a strict charge, at his peril, to keep them safely, would nevertheless take him and his family abroad in the night, just after the whole city had been aroused by an earthquake, and go to a pond or river to immerse them.

And who is required to believe this, in order to support immersion? Where is the proof that they were taken to a pond or river? Baptists dont say so—the New Testament is silent about it. But then where were they immersed? Probably in the Jail-yard. Then it must have been done by sprinkling. No, they might have been *immersed* in the Jail-yard. This is far more rational than going out to a pond.—But in what did they immerse them? In a tank or bath, which is a necessary article in every *Eastern prison*. It is a land of ablutions, and our common sense teaches us that in those warm climates, bathing is indispensable to health and life, and especially in a place of confinement. The mere *probability* that there might have been a *Tank* is a sufficient answer to this objection.

If the word [*Baptizo*] had been translated immersion, we should have had good sense in all the passages where it occurs, in a figurative or accommodated use, but if, on the other hand, it had been rendered *sprinkling*, we should not have had good sense. It never preserves the analogy. Let us try it.

1 Cor. 10: 2. "And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." To understand this case it is necessary to refer to the facts. (Ex. 14: 19—22) "And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them; And it came be-

tween the camp of the Egyptians, and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darknes to them, but it gave light by night to these; ~~and~~ that the one came not near the other all the night," &c.

Paul says, "all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized *in the cloud, and in the sea*. If they passed under the cloud it must have been this bright cloud of glory which gave light to the camp of Israel, or it must have been a cloud of rain—and if the latter, and the apostle wished to state something which literally occurred, he might have said—The cloud and the sea sprinkled on them,—but his language is figurative and nothing but the term *baptism* could give any adequate idea of their situation. It is to their enclosed situation that the apostle refers. They were under the cloud, and surrounded by the sea, in the same manner that the candidate by immersion is under the water and surrounded by the water. Here is a likeness to immersion but what conceivable likeness can there be to sprinkling or pouring unless the expressions are literal and refer to a sprinkling of rain from a cloud. But they are figurative. To say nothing of the inconvenience of a pouring rain upon this large body of people with their children, it is utterly at variance with the facts of the case. They went over on dry ground.

Witsius says: "How were the Israelites baptized in the cloud and in the sea, seeing they were neither immersed in the sea, nor wetted by the cloud? It is to be considered, that the Apostle here uses the term baptism in a figurative sense. The cloud hung over their heads; and so the water is over those that are baptized. The sea surrounded them on each side; and so the water, in regard to those that are baptized." The same testimony is given by Turretinus, Venema, Grotius, Gataker, Pool's Continuator, Hammond, Whitby, and many others, *all Pedobaptists*.

To prove that it rained upon them at the time of their passage the words are quoted,

"The waters saw thee O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid; the depths also were troubled. The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound; thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great

waters, and thy footsteps are not known." In this last sentence there is certainly no reference to the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea. It is merely the expression of a particular fact. God's way is always in the sea, and his path in the great waters: and this idea is strengthened by the last words, "Thy footsteps are not known." But how can it be inferred from any part of the passage that these things occurred at the Red Sea? The expressions are not such as would be likely to be employed on such an occasion. It is far more probable that the events relate to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai. This is confirmed by similar language in a previous Psalm. "O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness; Selah. The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God; even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel. Thou O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance when it was weary." Surely a Pedobaptist ought to be the last person who would wish to place the whole camp of Israel in such an uncomfortable situation as that they must be wet through, even their *infants*, by a pouring rain, especially when no reason can be assigned why rain should descend at all. Besides, if such a pouring rain occurred, why should the Apostle say that they went over as on dry land! Again the passage does not show that they were baptized by the cloud, but *in* the cloud and *in* the sea—not *by* the cloud, *in* the sea.

Another instance of figurative use occurs in relation to the sufferings of Christ. Luke 12: 50. "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." It is granted that this baptism refers to the sufferings of Christ. The word of course is accommodated, in the same way that the English word "*plunged*" is accommodated in the sentence, "*He was plunged into the deepest distress.*"

The sufferings of Christ were intense beyond the conception of mortals. In the garden, he sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground. They extorted from him the language, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." On the cross, he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." He was *overwhelmed* with sorrow, *plunged* into the deepest distress. Read the passage

"I have a *sprinkling* to be *sprinkled with*, and how am I straitened!" It is *poor, mean, worthless*; it is a burlesque of his sufferings. But translate it *immersion*, and how expressive of the whole truth, "I have an *immersion* to be *immersed with*, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished."

DR. DODDRIDGE thus paraphrases the place.

"I have indeed a most dreadful baptism to be baptized with; and know that I shall be shortly bathed, as it were, in blood, and *plunged* in the most *overwhelming* distress."

Paraphrase on Luke 12: 50.

WITSIUS. "Immersion into the water is to be considered by us as exhibiting that dreadful abyss of Divine Justice, in which Christ for our sins, was for a time, as it were, absorbed; as in David, his type, he complains, Psalm 69: 2., *I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.*"

Econ. of the Cov. L. IV. C. 16: § 26.

MR. HERVEY, the pious author of *Theron and Aspasio*, expresses himself, on this subject, with great energy. "He longed, (beneficent, blessed BEING!) he longed for the fatal hour. He severely rebuked one of his disciples who would have dissuaded him from going as a volunteer to the cross.—He was even *straitened*, under a kind of holy uneasiness, till the dreadful work was accomplished: till he was *baptized with the baptism of his sufferings*, bathed in blood, and *plunged* in death.

Theron and Aspasio, Vol. II. p. 150.

The descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost supports the same idea. John in allusion to this event, had said, "He shall baptize you with (properly *in*) the Holy Ghost and with fire." When that solemn and glorious day arrived, "they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house, where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all *filled* with the Holy Ghost," &c. It has been said, that a mere *sound* or *echo* filled the house. We believe it was the Holy Ghost which in this manner filled the house; but independently of this, no promise was ever given that the house should be baptized. "He shall baptize *you*," not the room. But how were they baptized? they were "*filled* with the Holy Ghost." The influence of the Spirit was *plentiful*; not partial, but *complete*. Should it be asserted that the baptism

of the Holy Ghost is described by the expressions,—To shed forth—To come upon—To fall upon—To pour out—These are merely words designating the same influence—because it is distinctly stated in Acts 11: 15, that “the Holy Ghost fell on *them*, as on *us*, at the beginning.” But how did it fall upon *them* at the beginning? Partially! Then sprinkling or pouring is a good likeness. The contrary is true: it fell upon them so as to *fill* them; or it was poured, or shed upon them, so as to *fill* them. It was a *powerful*, a complete *influence*.—Surely immersion corresponds with the idea of *filling*, much better than does sprinkling. We do not suppose that the meaning of the word [*Baptizo*] is to be derived from its figurative application. We make no efforts to establish this; but merely to show, that the figurative use is perfectly consistent with the ordinary meaning of the word;—that they harmonize;—that, upon the supposition of the word meaning sprinkling, they cannot and do not harmonize;—and this we have fairly established.

Allusions to the ordinance are made in the following passages.

Rom. 6: 4. “Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?—Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”

Col. 2: 12. “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”

It would be useless to spend any time in showing that the comparison of baptism to a burial, favours immersion. The allusion to our practice is plain, and perfectly intelligible.—But as the figure of planting has been applied to the planting of trees, in which only a part is put under the ground, we shall take the liberty of exhibiting the mistake. In the first place, the allusion to planting, is precisely of the same character with that of burying.—The Apostle says, “We are buried with him by baptism into death.” This is the *fact*. He then adds “For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” Here is the *inference* from the same fact repeated.

The word *planting* therefore, is a mere change of expression, which is as well supplied with the word *buried*, and evidently conveys no other idea. Let it be presented in this shape. *We are buried with him by baptism into death; and if we have thus been buried or planted together in the likeness of his death &c.*

The same results follow each time in the passage. In the second place, this planting is referred to the death of Christ. But Christ in his death is never compared to the planting (rather transplanting) of a tree. He is compared to the planting of a grain of corn in the earth. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." *John 12: 24.*

Let us now hear what some of our most learned Pedobaptists have said.

Dr. McKnight: "*Planted together in the likeness of his death.*" The burying of Christ, and of believers, first in the water of baptism, and afterwards in the earth, is fitly enough compared to *the planting of seeds in the earth*, because the effect in both cases, is a reviviscence to a state of greater perfection."

Assembly of Divines: "*Planted together:*" by this elegant similitude, the Apostle represents to us, that as a plant that is set in the earth, lieth as dead, and immoveable for a time, but after, springs up and flourishes, so Christ's body lay dead for a while in the grave, but sprang up and reflowered, in his resurrection; and we also, when we are baptized, are buried, as it were, in the water for a time, but after, are raised up to newness of life."

Scott: "By an elegant metaphor, the Apostle compares Christ, who died and was buried, and rose again from the dead, to a plant, which being covered in the earth, germinates in due time."

The Apostle in these passages urges upon believers a holy course of conduct, and appeals to their baptism as a ground for the exhortation. They had been immersed into Jesus Christ, i. e. into a profession of his religion, and this was a baptism into his death; in other words, a reliance upon his death and conformity to it. Our Lord *died* and was *buried* on account of sin, and we, by our baptism, profess to be buried to the love and the practice of sin. There are several expressions of a similar character which throw light upon the words, "*baptized into his death.*" The phrases, "If we

have been planted together in the *likeness* of his death"—“Our old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed”—“Ye are also become dead to the law by the body of Christ”—“Now if we be dead with Christ”—all these go to prove that there is, in our baptism, an emblematical representation of our union with Christ in his death, as also our participation in the benefits of his resurrection.

What does death intimate to us but a separation from the world? What is signified by resurrection, but an entrance into a new state of being? The placing of the body under water represents the former; the rising up out of the water the latter. And what is the character of a christian? “Old things have passed away; behold all things have become new.”

He is dead to sin, and alive unto God. The Apostle says again, (7 v.) “He that is dead is freed from sin” i. e. he who is dead with Christ, of which his immersion is an emblem. The improvement of this fact he subsequently states, (Rom. 6: 11—14.

The emblematical representation of our burial to sin, and our resurrection to a life of holiness; the representation of Christ's *death* for our *offences*, and his *rising* for our justification, as illustrated by Paul in these passages must be entirely lost to those who submit not to immersion. By no possible arrangement can the mind form a resemblance to sprinkling.

Another very striking allusion is found in the Epistle to the Hebrews, x ch. 22 v. “And having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in the full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and *our bodies washed with pure water.*”

We cannot express ourselves in a more forcible and correct manner than in the language of a clergyman of the church of England in some letters to Bishop Hoadly. He says, “The writers of the New Testament make use of two words, [*baptizo*] and [*louo*,] which leads us to the precise meaning of baptism, the latter of which is almost the constant word of the Septuagint, in those very numerous places where bathing or washing the whole body is commanded, in contradiction to every other practice of washing the hands or feet, or sprinkling or washing of clothes. [*lousetai udati*,] occurs no less than eleven times in one chapter, where bath-

ing the body is appointed on sundry occasions, as a distinct rite from washing the hands or garments, &c. &c. Since therefore [*lousetai udati*,] used times without number in the Old Testament, never imports less than bathing, or washing the whole body; it follows, baptism means the same, when it is expressed by "*our body washed with pure water*."

To a philologist like Dr. W——, this must be perfect demonstration, and we are inclined to the idea, that if this passage had occurred to him before he published his sermon, it never would have been published.

Baptism, then, is *immersion*. But it has been changed into *sprinkling*, and some reasons have been assigned for the change. One of the popular reasons, is that *it will answer the same purpose*. Thus thought Saul when contrary to the command of God, he reserved a part of the cattle, and the life of Ahab his captive. *Compassionate King!* But what was the result? He was deprived of his kingdom. Jehovah frowned upon him for disobedience. And thus will He frown upon every soul that dares to change his ordinances. "*Answer the same purpose!*" Horrible! Then Jesus Christ is the servant and you are the Lord. He tells you to be immersed. You offer the sacrifice of sprinkling and he accepts it; and you are his *Lord*, instead of his *servant*. "*Answer the same purpose!*" No christian man can advocate such a reason for the change. It manifests entire disrespect for the authority of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Baxter and Bishop Burnet give as a reason, the coldness of their climate. But are Baptists in their climate less healthy than Pedobaptists? Can it be shown that in any country, persons have sustained injury by immersion?

It has been said that if a person were confined to his bed by severe illness, and at the same time desirous of baptism, it would be exceedingly dangerous to immerse him, and that therefore he ought to be sprinkled. But *must* he be baptized in such a case? Has God ever required a man to do that for which he has no natural or physical strength? A minister is commanded to preach the gospel; to be instant in season, and out of season. If he should be prostrated by disease, he is not required to go forth to the people—he cannot.—Must the people therefore be brought to him? Let the advocates of this reason for sprinkling, study the passage "*I will have mercy and not sacrifice*."

The Israelites were enjoined to circumcise their male children on the 8th day; and yet for the space of 40 years this rite was omitted, because of the danger that must arise from it, in their traversing the wilderness. In all that time, the Jews did not venture to cut off a part of a *finger*, as a substitute for this rite. Yet this would have been quite as justifiable as the change from immersion to sprinkling.

It is a serious affair to alter the word or the ordinances of God. Two of the sons of Aaron, in the offering of incense, made a change in a single circumstance, and fire from the Lord destroyed them. Jehovah will be sanctified, in them that come nigh him, and before all the people he will be glorified.

In the Standard, a Presbyterian paper of this city, under date of February 22d, 1833, there is a piece on the subject of Baptism, designed to prove that Saul was baptized by sprinkling. The writer I know not, but as it appears in a prominent part of this periodical, under the head of "*Scripture Illustrations*," and is published without note or comment, I conclude the Editor is willing that his brethren and others who read the paper, should consider it as expressing his own sentiments; or, at least, that he judges it worthy of a place among the arguments on the side of sprinkling. If this is a correct conclusion, we perceive the strongest indication of this truth, that *sprinkling has waxed old, and is ready to vanish away*. We hail it as a new era in this controversy.

The ground which the writer assumes is this; that Saul was baptized *in an erect posture*, and if so, it was not by immersion. "Here (he says) I set my foot, which is not to be moved away by bold affirmation, or mere guess-work, or unauthorized assumption." He is not the first man who has fancied his footing secure, when it has been fixed in the sand. He professes to esteem the Baptists for their orthodoxy and piety. We are sorry that, after such a profession, he should write the following language.

"Suppose the translators had said, *Paul stood up* and was baptized, methinks it would have saved a multitude from the great inconvenience, as well as *risk of life and health*, by plunging all over in the *grave of waters*, to get their sins forgiven, which blessing has been obtained by myriads, without the expediency and inefficacy of *such a watery machine*." It may be said that this is levelled against those who are called

Campbellites; but is it not a ridicule of the Baptist practice? "*Risk of life and health,*" "*grave of waters!*"—"a watery machine!" For ourselves, we are so accustomed to ridicule that we can bear it; but we fear that such language is calculated to hold up *the word of God itself* to contempt. We are sorry.

The writer says that "*this whole transaction took place in the house of Judas; there Ananias was seen in a vision coming in, and when divinely instructed, he entered into the house, and there was Saul baptized.*"

Now, in the first place, this is "*bold affirmation, mere guess-work, unauthorised assumption.*" A poor place for a man to set his foot. The narrative does not say that he was baptized in the house. It says "*He arose and was baptized.*" But the writer infers that it occurred in the house, because the scales fell from his eyes there, and he received sight. Would it be correct to say, "*the umbrella stands in a corner of the room, therefore it rains.*"

But, in the second place, if it could be proved that this occurred in the house, it would be a correct inference that there was a convenience in the house for bathing or immersing,—a thing by no means uncommon in the dwellings of the Orientals; because the word means to immerse, as has been shown.

The whole force of his argument turns upon the meaning of the word translated, "*arose,*" and on this he relies with great confidence. He says it ought to be read "*and he having stood up, was baptized.*" Let us examine this learned criticism.—The word used is *anastas*, a participle from the verb *anistemi*, the meaning of which is, *to rise*. It is frequently used for the resurrection of Christ, and of the bodies of men in general. Dr. George Campbell of Aberden says, "the word *anastasis* denotes simply being raised from inactivity to action, or from obscurity to eminence. The verb has the like latitude of signification; and both words are used in this extent, by the writers of the New Testament, as well as by the seventy."

This word occurs very frequently in the Septuagint, and signifies *to arise from inactivity to action, or to arise with a view to motion and action*. It means in language plainer still, *to get up and go about something*. This is the signification in the following passages, viz: Gen. 31: 13. 35: 1. Ex. 1: 8. 21: 19. Deut. 17: 8. Josh. 1: 2. Judges 5: 12. 8: 21. 2: 10. 5: 7.

1 Sam. 23: 16. 25: 1. 2 Sam. 2: 14. 3: 21. 12: 21. 1 Kings 19: 21. 2 Kings 9: 2. 23: 25. 1 Chron. 22: 16. Ps. iii. 7. vii. 6. xii. 5. xlv. 26. lxxviii. 1. lxxxviii. 10. cii. 13. lxxvi. 9. Cant. 2: 13. 3: 2. Isa. 21: 5. 33: 10. Jer. 2: 27. Lam. 2: 19. Jonah 3: 3. Mic. 2: 10. 4: 13. Amos 7: 9.

The word occurs very frequently in the New Testament, and has the same meaning. See the following places.

Matt. 9: 9. Mark 3: 26. Luke 11: 7. 22: 46. 15: 18, 20. Acts 5: 36, 37. 9: 39. Mark 1: 35, and in numerous instances where the resurrection is spoken of.

"*To stand up erect*," is a modification of the meaning of the word, yet strictly including the idea of *rising*; in the same way that *to wash* is a modification of the meaning of the word (*Baptizo*,) yet strictly including the idea of immersion. There can be no *standing up* except by *rising* from a recumbent posture.

When the word is accommodated to signify *standing up upon the feet*, simply, there is something in the connexion, or in the nature of the case, to authorize the accommodation. In the instances which this writer has produced, the very circumstances of the case prove that the word is modified.—And we can help him to a few more cases. Let him consult Acts 9: 40. 10: 26. 14: 10. A very remarkable case is found in the 26th chapter of Acts and the 16 verse.

"But *rise* (anastethi) and *stand* (stethi) upon thy feet." The former word embraces the general idea, the latter, its modification.

The ordinary use of the word is that by which we must be guided:—and allow me here to repeat the rule,—"*Every word must be used in its ordinary signification, unless there be something in the connexion, or in the nature of the case to justify a change.*" In this case the meaning is merely an accommodated one. You may reject this rule, and then I will prove that God is not a being *eternal* in his existence: You may adopt the rule, and then your own criticism is overthrown.

But before we dismiss this new translation which you have been pleased to give, we will request you to read the following passages upon your own plan.

"Now *stand on thy feet*, get thee out of this land."

"*Stand on thy feet*, go up to Bethel and dwell there."

"If there *stand on his feet* among you a prophet,"

"Now, therefore, *stand on thy feet*, go over this Jordan."

"*Stand on thy feet*, Barak, lead thy captivity captive."

"I will *stand on my feet*, and gather all Israel to my Lord."

"*Stand on thy feet*, my love, my fair one, and come away."

"After thee shall *stand on its feet* another kingdom."

"*Stand on your feet*, ye, and depart, this is not your rest."

"I will *stand on my feet* and go to my father."

"And he *stood on his feet*, and came to his father."

"A sceptre shall *stand on its feet* out of Israel."

"Suffered them not to *stand on their feet* against Saul."

"When the child was dead, thou *didst stand on thy feet* and eat bread."

"I will *stand on my feet* now, and go about the city."

"Why sleep ye, *stand on your feet* and pray."

"But *stand up*, and stand upon thy feet."

Try it in the same translation in the following passages—Matt. 17: 9. Mark 12: 23, 25. Luke 16: 31. John 11: 23, 24. Acts 2: 24, 32. 1 Thess. 4: 16. Rom. 15: 12. Ex. 1: 8. 1 Sam. 23: 16. Ps. 76: 9. Danl. 6: 9.—and if these will not be sufficient we can furnish some thirty or forty more.

This gentleman says—"Let it be particularly noted, as it will fully settle this point, the participle *anastas* does not assume the locomotive character; it conveys no such idea; it does not allow of a person moving from place to place, but confines him to the *standing* or *erect* posture."

Now to oblige him, since it will fully settle this point, we shall note it particularly, in the following places where the participle *anastas* occurs, both in the Septuagint and the New Testament.

"And God said unto Jacob, arise, (*anastas*) go up to Beth-el and dwell there."—Gen. 35: 1.

"Then shalt thou arise, (*anastas*) and get thee up into the place, which the Lord thy God shall choose."—Deut. 17: 8.

"Arise, (*anastas*) go over this Jordan."—Joshua 1: 2.

"Thou shalt arise (*anastas*) and have mercy upon Zion."—Ps. 102: 13.

"And he arose (*anastas*) and followed him."—Matt. 9: 9.

"I will arise (*anastas*) and go to my father." And he arose (*anastas*) and came to his father.—Luke 15: 18, 20.

The plural form of this participle occurs in Isaiah 21: 5. "arise, ye princes, and anoint the shield"—and also in Luke 22: 46. "Rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

Do these passages confine the persons to the *standing* or *erect posture*?"

In connection with the preceding remarks take the fact, that in the numerous instances in which the words, "*to stand*," "*stand up*," "*stood*," and "*stood up*," occur, in the Old Testament, the Septuagint, almost without an exception, has a different word. It is neither *anistemi* nor its participle *anastas*.

The ordinary signification of the word, then, is *to arise from inactivity to action, or with a view to motion and action*: in other words, it means, *to get ready to do something*.

"*To stand up*," is merely a modification of this meaning, and must be determined by the connexion, or the nature of the case. But the connexion, and the circumstances of the case before us forbid the accommodation or modification of the ordinary meaning. In support of this declaration, consider—

1. The passage in Acts 22: 16, "And now why tarriest thou, arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins."

"*Why tarriest thou*?" i. e. Why dost thou *delay*, or *linger*, or *lose time*? *Hasten*—arise and be baptized. The word *arise* is obviously opposed to *tarriest*, and implies immediate motion or action. "*Wash away thy sins*"—The word for *wash* here is *apolousai*. On the word *louo*, we have before shown, that it is the term used by the seventy where bathing the whole body is intended in distinction to the washing of hands &c. To that passage the reader is referred. Keeping this in view, let us read the passage—"Stand on thy feet and be sprinkled, and wash (or bathe) away thy sins."—Is not the allusion to washing totally disfigured?

2. We have shown that the word [*Baptizo*] means to *immerse*, and if the word had been translated in this passage, all would have been beautiful and appropriate. "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be *immersed*, and wash away thy sins."

3. In Damascus, the place where Saul was at this time, there were places suitable for immersing. "Are not Abana and Pharpar rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?" 2 Kings 5: 12. Look at the following testimony.

ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES. "Much is written of the clearness, sweetness, and usefulness of these two rivers. The one is said to run through many parts of Damascus, whereby it comes to pass, that *most of the houses* in that city are fur-

nished with *store* of good water." Perhaps Judas had a *store* in his house.

4. In the last place, Paul himself shall decide how his baptism was performed, "So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, *were baptized into his death; therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death.*" Rom. 6: 3. 4.)

The new version which we have fairly met and overturned reminds us of a sermon preached some years ago in the state of Pensylvania, to an admiring crowd. The text was, "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, &c." i. e. *without any kind of doubt*—but the preacher observed, "My dear friends, they tell you that it is a great mystery, something which you cannot comprehend, and so it is, *without controversy*, but *with controversy* all is plain and easy." A number of persons believed the illustration as firmly as if an angel had delivered the message—and probably many will also catch at the new version, "*Stand up erect and be sprinkled.*" We hope for the honor of Christianity that its teachers will be careful, and sure of the solidity of their foundation before they *set down their foot* and perpetuate practices which the word of God does not sanction. To our pedobaptist friends, we would address affectionately the language of Ananias to Saul, "*Arise and be immersed.*"

It has already been shown that infants were excluded from John's baptism, and that all his subjects were persons who professed to repent of their sins, and to believe on him who was to come.

The baptism of John was, therefore, emphatically, the baptism of persons professing repentance. In all the instances that occur, there is not the least trace of infants receiving this ordinance. Whatever dispensation we assign to John, whether that of the law, or an intermediate one, partaking of the character and attributes both of the law and the Gospel, still it was precisely the same as that under which baptism was administered by the disciples of our Lord previously to his resurrection: and that they knew nothing of infant immersion, is apparent from the fact, that they even forbade certain parents to bring their children to Christ that he might lay his hands upon them.

If infants formed a part of that people which were being made ready for the Lord, it was impossible that the disciples could have pursued such a forbidding course; but it is evident

that they were entirely ignorant of the modern process of bringing children into the church, either by *baptizing* or by *blessing* them.

Dr. Whitby says: "It is not to be wondered at that infants were not baptized during John's ministry; because the baptism used by John and Christ's disciples, was only the baptism of repentance and faith in the Messiah which was to come, of both which infants were incapable."

If the disciples of Christ were in the habit of passing by infants, and immersing only the adult, upon a profession of repentance; and if, afterwards, children were so incorporated into the church as that their baptism became necessary, some declaration, it may be reasonably presumed, can be found or some practice sanctioning it—or some passages from which it might be fairly inferred. If after the resurrection of Christ, the disciples baptized infants, a very great change occurred; a very important addition was made. They acted either upon their own authority and responsibility, or upon the authority of their master. The former is contrary to their meekness and teachableness of spirit, and to the fact that they were specially commissioned; unless indeed, they afterwards were induced to this course, by the direction of the Spirit, and then *their* instructions, and *their* example must be the basis of our obedience.

The latter, that is, by the authority of their master, is doubtless the correct position. But where is that authority? Certainly, if any where, in his commission, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The same substantially is recorded by the Evangelist Mark: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."

In this commission, infants are not mentioned; and if it were intended to include them, it includes *all* and not merely descendants of pious parents. Should it be said that children form a considerable part of all nations, and therefore they are embraced in the expression "*all nations*," the same may be said of the infant offspring of unbelievers; and of course they are as much entitled to the ordinance as others. Do the following passages include infants? "Ye shall be hated of all nations." What! infants hate! "Praise the Lord all ye

nations." Infants praise! "My house shall be called of all nations a house of prayer." Called so by infants!

The word employed in the commission (*mathetuse*) signifies not merely to teach but to teach so as to make disciples. It occurs but a few times in the New Testament.

Matthew 13: 52. "Every scribe which is *instructed* into the kingdom of heaven."

Matt. 27: 57. "Joseph who also himself was *Jesus' disciple*."

Acts 14: 21. "When they had preached the Gospel to that city, and had *taught* many," &c.

Hence it must be evident, that the disciples were authorized by the commission to go forth and teach among the nations so as to prevail on many to believe their doctrines, and having thus prevailed, to immerse them.

It has been asserted, that we can form no judgment from the order of the words; but if this be true, our Lord has left us to infer, even the baptism of believers. If this be true, the ordinance must extend to *all nations*, or to a *part* of all nations. Not to *all*, for this would embrace unbelievers. Not to a *part*, because it would be beyond the power of men to determine *what* part. Some contend that we are to disciple all nations by baptizing them first. This is certainly a valuable hint to our Missionary Societies. Let them immediately instruct their missionaries among the heathen, first to immerse people without discrimination. It will be time enough to instruct them afterwards.

The commission in Mark limits the baptism to believers. "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.*"

But the grammatical construction in Matt. makes every thing plain, "Go teach [or disciple] all nations [*Panta ta ethne*] baptizing them," (*Autous*). *Ethne* is neuter—*autous* is masculine, and refers to the noun *Mathetas* understood. Go *make disciples* in all nations, by preaching the Gospel of repentance and remission through Christ, baptizing *those* who are by this means made disciples, &c.

But, in one word, the instructions before us are so plain that "he who runs may read, and he who reads may understand." We are not alone in this view. Several Pedobaptists of respectability and learning and piety unite with us.

Calvin says: "Because Christ requires teaching before baptizing and will have *believers only* admitted to baptism, bap-

tism does not seem to be rightly administered except faith precedes."

Saurin: "In the primitive church instruction preceded baptism, agreeably to the order of Jesus Christ.—"Go teach," &c.

MR. BAXTER has a very forcible passage on the same place. "Go, disciple me all nations, baptizing them. As for those that say they are disciplined by baptizing, and not before baptizing, they speak not the sense of the text; nor that which is true or rational—else why should one be baptized more than another? This is not like some occasional historical mention of baptism; but it is the very commission of Christ to his apostles, for preaching and baptizing: and purposely expresseth their several works in their several places and order. Their *first* task is, by teaching, to make disciples, which are by Mark called believers. The *second* work is, to baptize them, whereto is annexed the promise of their salvation. The *third* work is, to teach them all other things which are afterwards to be learned in the school of Christ. [Observe what follows.] To condemn this order, is to renounce all rules of order; for where can we expect to find it, if not here? I profess, my conscience is fully satisfied from this text, that it is one kind of faith, *even saving*, that **MUST GO BEFORE BAPTISM**: and the profession whereof, the minister must expect."

Dr. Whitby: "*Mathetuein*, here, is to preach the gospel to all nations, and to engage them to believe it, in order to their profession of that faith by baptism; as seems apparent, *first*, from that parallel commission, Mark 16: 15. "Go preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved:" *secondly*, from the scripture notion of a disciple, that being still the same as a believer. If here it should be said that I yielded too much to the Antipædobaptists, by saying, that to be made disciples here, is to be taught to believe in Christ that so they might be his disciples; I desire any one to tell me how the apostles could *mathetuein*, make a disciple of an heathen, or unbelieving Jew, without being *Mathetai*, or teachers of them; whether they were not sent to preach to those that could hear, and to teach them to whom they preached that Jesus was the Christ, and only to baptise them when they did believe this."—see *Comment. in loc.*

Grotius: "Since there are two ways of teaching, the one,

by introduction to the first principles—the other, by more extensive instruction: the former seems to be intended by *Mathetuein*, for that is, as it were, to bring into discipline, and is to precede baptism; the latter, is pointed out by *Didaskein*, which is to follow baptism.”—see *Annot. in loc.*

Mr. Poole’s continuators: “Go ye therefore and teach all nations.” The Greek is *Mathetusate*, make disciples all nations; but that must be by preaching, and instructing them in the principles of the christian faith; and Mark expounds it, telling us our Saviour said, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; that is, to every reasonable creature capable of hearing and receiving it. I cannot be of their mind, who think that persons may be baptised before they be taught: we want precedents of any such baptism in scripture; though indeed we find precedents of persons baptised, who had but a small degree of the knowledge of the gospel; but it should seem that they were all first taught that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and were not baptized till they professed such belief (*Acts 8: 37;*) and John baptised them in Jordan confessing their sins,” *Mat. 3: 6.*—see *Annot in loc.*

Of those at Samaria it is said, “When they *believed* Philip preaching, they were baptized, *both men and women.*”—*Acts, 8: 12, 13.*

In the case of the Eunuch, “Philip said, if thou *believest with all thine heart*, thou mayest.” *Acts 8: 37.*

We might multiply examples; but it is sufficient to observe that no examples occur in which the persons baptized were not professed believers. When children are parties concerned, even in cases of less importance they are mentioned.

Acts 21: 5. “They all brought us on our way with wives and *children*, till we were out of the city.”

Matt. 14: 21. They that had eaten were about 5000 men besides women and *children.*”

Is it not most astonishing, that *new* subjects should be attached to the institution of baptism, and yet no account of them in any part of the New Testament?

The Scriptures being entirely silent upon this point, no argument for the baptism of infants can be drawn from that silence. If silence prove it, then the *sprinkling of holy water*, the *use of salt and spittle*, the *saying of mass for the repose of the dead*, the *counting of beads*, the *various penances of the Ro-*

man church may all be established by *silence*. *What a wonder working power this silence is!!!*

Our pedobaptist brethren must take some other ground; they cannot stand here. They *have* taken another ground—they give up the argument for positive proof when closely pursued, and fly to *mere inference*. But from what part of the New Testament do they infer it? Where are the passages? Where are the facts?

1. Do they infer infant baptism from allusions to this ordinance? Certainly not from the language “The like figure whereunto, even baptism doth also now save us: not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the *answer of a good conscience towards God*.”

“As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have *put on Christ*.” “Buried with him in baptism, *wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead*.” These allusions exclude infants.

2. Do they infer infant baptism from the mention of households? It is quite as natural to infer that there are *unbelieving servants* in these households, as that there were small-children. Yes, it is an inference far more natural.

In order to support the doctrine of infant baptism, from households, it must first be proved that infants were there. Many families have no children; and many such have received immersion upon a profession of faith and repentance: or, to give it force, it must be shown that when *households* are mentioned, all the members of the family are in Scripture language included: but “a man’s foes shall be they of his own household”—surely not his infants.

Independently of these considerations, such things are asserted of these households, as necessarily *exclude* infants.

Cornelius with *all his house feared God*. The Jailer with *all his house* received instruction, and *rejoiced believing in God*. The household of Stephanus, *addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints*, and were the *first fruits* of Achaia. *Lydia* was a seller of purple, and at the time of her baptism was nearly 300 miles from her home. Our opponents have a winding journey of a greater distance than *that*, before they sprinkle her infants. In the first place, they suppose that she had at one time or other a husband; in the next place, that she had little children; then, that she brought them all that jour-

ney without servants; for it is as natural to infer these, and more so, than to infer that she had children, and last of all, that her infants were baptized—of course they must make the inference that her servants also were baptized, and that without faith—unless they admit that the last verse of the chapter in which her case is recorded, refers to those of her household who submitted to the ordinance. But whether admitted or not, it is true, and necessarily *excludes* infants: “And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.”

3. Do our Pedobaptist brethren infer infant baptism from the passage, “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven?”

Will it be said that, because Christ took these little ones in his arms and blessed them, agreeably to the wishes of the parents, therefore, he handed them over to his disciples to baptize them, since he himself baptized not? This would be logic indeed! But perhaps, the point for decision is this—“Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.” Whether the *kingdom* means here, the state of glory, or the church upon earth; if the passage be capable of a literal interpretation at all, it must be that of *such*, i. e. of *children*, the kingdom of heaven is composed. In either case it is erroneous; for in heaven, there are multitudes who lived on this stage of action, twenty, thirty, forty, seventy, a hundred, nine hundred years and more; and in the church upon earth, multitudes are enrolled who have passed the middle period of life. It cannot therefore be considered *absolutely*, that the kingdom of God is composed of children:—*Persons* cannot be intended, but simply *characters*. Of such, in point of disposition, the kingdom is formed. Our Lord frequently illustrated this principle.—“Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as a little child*, he shall not enter therein.” “Except ye be converted and become *as little children*, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven.”

If these little children were members of the church of Christ, it is very strange that the disciples were unacquainted with the fact. They refused to let the poor infants be brought to him.

4. Do they infer infant baptism from the expressions, “The promise is to you and to your children?”—What promise? Not the promise made to Abraham—because it includes both

Jews and Gentiles. "*To all that are afar off*,"—But in the promise to Abraham, no privileges were stipulated to the Gentiles. If it be said that the promise to Abraham refers not to his natural seed, but to his spiritual, then the inference from this passage is void, for the Apostle Paul declares that they which are *of faith*, are the children of Abraham—and consequently children, not capable of exercising faith, are not his spiritual seed. What then is the promise?—When Peter, standing up with the eleven, defended himself and his brethren, against the charge of intoxication, he said, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy &c. He then charged them with the death of Jesus Christ, and showed the defeat of their plans; for, he adds, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father, the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

His address was attended with divine power, numbers were in the greatest alarm and distress of mind, and called upon the disciples to know what they must do. Then Peter said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. *For*, the promise is to you and to your children &c." The promise of the Holy Ghost is evidently intended. This is the view of Dr. Dodridge, Dr. Owen, Dr. Hammond, Dr. Whitby, Witsius, Venema, and Limborch.

If the promise *to them and their children*, render legitimate the inference, that children are church members, then their parents also were members of the Gospel church, for the promise was as much to them, as to their offspring. This however is not the fact. The *parents* were not members by virtue of any such promise, but became such by faith and baptism. Should it be said that they always were members in the purpose of God, and the promise always belonged to them and their children, then multitudes of children whose parents are professedly ungodly, are also in divine purpose, members of the church, and if this give a title to baptism, no children can ever be baptized, for the mind of God is not known to men.

"Your children." It is not said your *infants*. Their whole offspring was included in the language of Peter. It is very probable that in such a vast assemblage, some had children who had arrived at years of maturity. If the promise therefore implied the baptism of their children—it implied *all* their children.

In illustration of this remark, I will introduce here an incident which is related in the letters of David and John, published in Philadelphia in reply to the laborious work of Dr. Woods of Andover. With the writers of these letters I have the pleasure of being personally acquainted. Of the truth of the statement there can be no doubt, for one of them lived in the place where it occurred, at the time of its occurrence—"During a revival of religion in the town of N.—in a neighboring state, a plain man, who was a farmer, was, among others, hopefully converted, and felt it his duty to join some church. He himself was inclined to the Baptists, but his wife was a member with the Presbyterians. He thought it would be convenient on many accounts to go with his wife, and was desirous to be accommodating, but had some scruples, especially about the children being baptized. He called one day on Dr. R., the Presbyterian minister, a friendly, pleasant man, when the following dialogue ensued.

Farmer. I have come to converse with you on the subject of making a profession of religion. As my wife is a Presbyterian, it would be very desirable that we should walk together; but, I have some difficulties on my mind: perhaps you can remove them. I suppose, if I should join your church, it will be expected that I should bring forward my children for baptism.

Dr. R. Yes, we should expect it, as it is customary among us.

Farmer. I have one child four years old, can that be baptized on my faith?

Dr. R. O, yes.

Farmer. I have another seven years old, can that be admitted likewise?

Dr. R. Yes, it is often done; I see no difficulty.

Farmer. Well, I have one that is twelve years old, can that be baptized on my faith?

Dr. R. (With some hesitation,) Yes, we do sometimes; I see no difficulty.

Farmer. Well, but Dr., I have one that is *fourteen* years old, can that one be baptized on my faith?

Dr. R. (*With considerable embarrassment,*) Yes, I suppose so—yes, I see no difficulty.

The farmer, turning away somewhat abruptly, exclaimed, Ah! Dr., *I have not half enough faith for myself.*

Let the question be seriously answered: Are the children of our Pedobaptist brethren, members of the Gospel church, or are they not? If they are *members*, why deprive them of their privileges? Why prohibit their eating at the Lord's table? Because they would eat and drink to their own condemnation? If *members*, why not excommunicate them when they become immoral, as is frequently the case? If *not members*, why baptize them to make them such?

Shall we be told that they are not members of any *particular* church, but of the *church general*. Then they never were a part of those churches which were constituted by the Apostles, and consequently no argument can be drawn for baptizing them, because they were members of the church general. Nay more; it can never be *inferred* that they ought to receive this ordinance upon the ground of their membership, since the New Testament is not acquainted with such members, lays down no rules for their government—never supposes membership first, and baptism afterwards. If we understand what is meant by a *general church*, all pious Quakers are members. Would it be logical to say that in consequence of this general membership, they ought to be baptized? They ought to observe this ordinance, we grant, but solely on the ground that Jesus Christ has commanded it.

Besides, according to the view which some of our opponents take of this church, it is composed of all the pious throughout the world. But they also admit that the truly pious shall persevere to the end; therefore many children who have been supposed members, have ultimately proved to be hardened in sin; and the greater part of them as they rise into life, show that they never were converted. The consequence is inevitable, that this church is composed of the regenerate and the unregenerate. This may answer for a Jewish church—but it is not found in the New Testament. We challenge the least proof for *such* a church general. The church established by Jesus Christ, called the visible church, has sometimes its unregenerate persons who creep in—but to

this children do not belong. Not an instance can be produced from the Scriptures to show, that persons were ever baptized in consequence of their being members of any church—and, therefore, if it could even be proved that infants were members, they would not be entitled to receive baptism.

Independently of these considerations, the promise before us is restricted. “The promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*”

5. Do they infer infant baptism from the passage, “The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy?”

Here is not one word about baptism. Not one word in the whole chapter. It relates to seed generally, and therefore if it be right, the *little ones* receive baptism, it is right that *they* should who have arrived at maturity, irrespective of grace in the heart. But the passage refers to marriage, and unclean means illegitimate.

When the Jews returned from Babylon, they were commanded to put away their idolatrous wives. The Corinthians, alluded to in the passage, seemed to have thought that it became them to separate from their unbelieving companions. The Apostle opposes this step. “If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified,” &c. &c. The Apostle’s argument is simply this. You have pledged yourselves each to the other, the contract is lawful and cannot be dissolved—you are sanctified, or set apart for the ends of conjugal life. If this be not the fact, then your children are illegitimate, unclean. But as this is the fact, your children are legitimate or holy. The same word is employed of the unbelieving wife, and husband, as of the children; if, therefore, from this holiness which the children are said to possess, their baptism is to be inferred, that of the unbelieving parent may be as certainly inferred.

Another view of this passage is given by the Rev. Mr. Dagg of Philadelphia, which is worthy of attention. The substance is this.—Among the Jews, any thing which a person might legally touch, or associate with, was accounted *holy*,

and that which was legally prohibited, *unholy*. The question arose, if a believing wife have a husband, *who is not a member of the church*, is it her duty to leave him as an *unsanctified person*. The Apostle determines that she should not leave him, because the *matrimonial* relation, sanctifies the connexion, and not the *church* relation. If it were otherwise then their children must be put away; they must not be touched, nor educated, nor retained in their parent's house, because *they are not members of the church*. Now here is proof that the church at Corinth was a baptist church; and if so, then all the churches of that day, were baptist churches.

6. Can infant baptism be inferred from the addresses of the Apostles to the churches?

It is perfectly rational to conclude, that when believing parents take upon themselves the solemn responsibility of repenting and believing and promising to renounce the devil and all his works, *for their children*, that their duty should be frequently brought to mind by the ministers of the Gospel; and that the children also as they advance in years, and become acquainted with the Catechism, should be often reminded of their awful engagements which they made when infants, through their parents or sponsors. We say *it is perfectly rational to conclude so*, and we are justified by the fact as witnessed among Pedobaptists. But now, pious reader, look at the Epistles of Paul, and Peter, and James, and Jude, and John, and you will discover nothing of all this exhortation. They urge duty upon believers from their *own baptism*, but no reference is made whatever to the baptism of their children—no duties flow from this source. Not the least hint of their union with the church. In one place Paul specially addresses children, but no motive to duty is assigned from their early baptism. *Why this silence!* Certainly this doctrine was not known to the Apostles.

We have now shown that infant baptism has no support from the commission of Christ, from Apostolic practice, or from any passages of any kind in the New Testament. Not even an inference can be fairly drawn in its favor. Our brethren who cherish the practice, are themselves aware of these facts, and hence their chief resource has been in the pages of the Old Testament.

Infant baptism is not sanctioned by any of the Fathers, until the commencement of the third century, and then, only

in cases of *necessity*. The immediate successors of the Apostles, during the first century, whose writings are known, were Barnabas, Hermas, Clemens, Romanus, Ignatius and Polycarp. These fathers, though they frequently mention the baptism of believers, preserve a profound silence about infant baptism.

Thus for one hundred years after the birth of Christ, the subject is not once discussed, or even intimated. From this fact, we infer one of two things; either, that the ordinance was universally administered to infants, and therefore it was unnecessary to defend it; or, that it was not known at all during this period. This is merely introduced here; it will be used hereafter.

Dr. Dwight, in his excellent system of Divinity, asserts that "infant baptism was uniformly practised by the early christians." In proof of this assertion, he first proposes Justin Martyr, who, he says, was born near the close of the first century. But why date from his birth? Was it with a view to impress the reader with the idea that testimony may be derived from the first century? The language of this father, which he quotes, was not written till the middle of the second century, i. e. about the year of our Lord 150.

What is the language of Justin? "Many persons among us of 60 or 70 years old, of both sexes, who were discipled from childhood, do continue uncorrupted." And how many among us have been discipled or instructed in the religion of Jesus from early childhood. There is not one word about baptism in this place. Dr. Dwight says, "There never was any other mode of *making disciples from infancy*, except baptism." I suppose the reason is that they were incompetent to instruction. It is unfortunate for this argument, however, that it is altogether a human mode that is intended, and we have become too independent in this land of liberty, to submit to the tradition of the Elders, or any other tradition that makes void the law of God. The word which Justin employs, is the same as that used in the commission of Christ, and we have shown that it signifies to teach, so as to prevail upon those who hear, to become followers of Christ; in other words, to make disciples by teaching. Hence infant baptism has nothing to do with the language of Justin Martyr.

Besides, the great stress that is laid upon [*Paidon*] the word used by Justin, as though it referred to *infancy*, is altogether

unwarranted. It is the genitive plural of [*pais*] the meaning of which is "*a child*" whether in infancy or more advanced. It is used also for "*a son*" without respect to age. It is used for *a servant* or an *attendant*. It is employed for the young man Eutychus, who fell from the third loft while Paul was preaching. The latin translation in the London edition of his works, has the words "*qui a pueris*," "*who from boys*." "*A dying man will catch at straws*."

The next father brought in proof is *Irenæus*. He wrote near the end of the second century. Concerning Christ he says; "sanctifying every age, by that likeness it hath to him; for he came to save all by himself; all I say, who *by him* are *born again* unto God, infants, and little ones and children, and young men and old men; therefore he went through every age, and became an infant to infants, sanctifying infants; and to little ones, a little one, sanctifying those of that age; and likewise became an example of piety, righteousness, and subjection."

Dr. Dwight says: "By being born again, *Irenæus* intends *being baptized*, as he himself elsewhere clearly shows." It is unfortunate for this assertion, that in this part of the work of *Irenæus*, we have not his original words, but are dependent upon a *miserable version*. The translator uses *renasci*, which if it were intended to express baptism, is nothing to us nor to *Irenæus* himself. But, admitting for a moment that we are obliged to take the testimony of this translator, he could not have intended the word to mean *baptism*—because they are expressly said to be born again, *by him*, i. e. by Christ.

But farther; this passage is generally considered as spurious, and therefore can only be made useful in a spurious baptism.

It is true, that our Lord came to save all, who *by him* are *born again*; but it is not true, that he came save all who are baptized. What a dying cause it must be, when our opponents take *such* means to revive and sustain it!

Origen, who wrote in the third century, is represented as saying, "Infants are baptized for the remission of sins. The church hath received the tradition from the Apostles that baptism ought to be administered to infants."

But these words are not found in any writings of this father. They are taken wholly from a translation made by *Ruffinus* and *Jerome*, at the latter end of the fourth century, when

the church was almost overwhelmed with heresies. These translators acknowledge that they have *altered, abridged, and enlarged* the works of Origen, according to their own pleasure. We deny the authority of their translation, in a point of so much importance, and especially as all previous writers have preserved profound silence about infant baptism. We would *disdain* to employ it for the purpose of defeating an opponents.

For two hundred years after the birth of Christ, not a passage can be found to justify the practice we are opposing. If the ordinance were universally applied to infants, during all this time, and therefore, it was unnecessary to write about it, why did Tertullian, whose remaining works, according to Dr. Lardner, were written in the third century, oppose *infant baptism* as an error?

If Clemens Alexandrinus, who flourished in the latter part of the second, and beginning of the third century, advised *fishermen*, as Dr. Dwight says, to have the *image of an Apostle baptizing infants*, engraved upon their *seal rings*, it seems probable that this subject was first agitated about the year of our Lord 200.

Tertullian says, "What need is there of exposing sponsors to danger, since they may be prevented by death from accomplishing their promises, or be disappointed by the evil disposition of their children? Our Lord indeed doth say, Forbid not their coming to me; but let them come when they can understand; when they are capable of knowing where they are coming. Let them be made christians when they are able to know Jesus Christ. Why should their guiltless age hasten to the remission of sins (or baptism)?"

But what does this language prove? At most, it merely shows, that, in his time, some proposed the baptism of infants, and that he opposed it. It proves that some employed the passage "Suffer little children to come unto me," as an argument in its favour. This argument he answers, but no reference is made to any other source—no apostolic practice is intimated. If the Apostles baptized infants, and their example was generally followed, as it must have been if true, Tertullian must have known it, and opposing it as he did, he must have been a perfect heretic, an enemy to gospel ordinances. But this is not his character.

About the middle of the third century, one Fidus was at a

loss to know at what age, an infant might receive baptism. His Bible did not determine whether it were to be *before* or *after* the eighth day. It was a pity he did not refer to apostolic practice, for something must have been settled on this point long before, if infants were baptized in the primitive church. Even Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, could not decide it. A council was therefore called consisting of sixty-six bishops. This council attempted to prove, that infants ought to receive baptism. It is certain from this, that the practice met with opposition. How do they prove it? "That God denies grace to none; that God would be a respecter of persons, if he were to deny to infants, what he grants to adults." Astonishing!—But where is their *tradition from the Apostles, where the practice of the church?* They have assigned neither in support. They could not conscientiously do it.

We wholly deny that the opposition made to infant baptism, in the beginning of the third century, is a proof that it was generally sustained, as some have stated. If Pedobaptism were common in the first ages of the church, how will it be accounted for, that Gregory, Bishop of Constantinople, and Nectarius, his successor, and others, born of christian parents, were not baptized till they had arrived to years of discretion?

How will it be accounted for that sermons by Basil, Nazianzen, and others, were delivered to whole congregations of youth, urging them to be baptized?

Such men as these must have been *Baptists*, and the parents of all these youths must have been *Baptists*.

How will it be accounted for, that when a council assembled in Carthage, about the beginning of the fifth century, anathematized all those who refused to baptize infants, there were 400 churches in Africa that refused obedience and were persecuted to extermination?

In Britain, the Gospel was planted, certainly before the destruction of Jerusalem. After the conquests of the Saxons, we are informed that upwards of 2,000 dwelt together in a spacious building at Bangor, working with their hands and serving God in peace. How is it to be accounted for, that when Pope Gregory sent Austin, to entice them over to the Roman Church, they refused, because one of the terms of union, was the baptism of children? If it were an Apostolic practice, how came they to know nothing about it?

We shall introduce here a few Pedobaptist testimonies.

Salmasius: "In the two first centuries, *no one* was baptized, except, being instructed in the faith, and acquainted with the doctrine of Christ, he was able to profess himself a believer."

Curcellus: "The baptism of infants in the first two centuries after Christ, was altogether unknown; but in the third and fourth, was allowed by a *few*."

Bishop Barlow: "I do believe and know, that there is neither precept nor example in scripture for pedobaptism, nor any just evidence for it, for about 200 years after Christ."

Luther: "It cannot be proved by the sacred Scriptures that infant baptism was instituted by Christ, or begun by the first christians after the Apostles."

M. Formey: "They baptized from this time (the end of the second century) infants as well as adults."

Grotius: "It seems to me that the baptism of infants was, of old, much more frequently practiced in Africa than in Asia. You will not find in any of the councils a more ancient mention of this custom, than in the council of Carthage."

Thus we have shown that infant baptism was not brought in till about the beginning of the third century, and that it commenced in Africa the darkest part of the christian world. And here let it be remembered, that this was not the only error that had found its way into the church. The exorcising of the devil, the anointing in baptism, the consecration of the baptismal water, and other superstitions, were about this time introduced.

Oh when shall the church look forth, "*fair as the moon and clear as the sun!*" When shall the remains of papal superstition be interred, and the long train of Antichrist weep at its grave!!

Since infant baptism is not supported by the command of Christ, nor by any examples in the Apostle's days, nor by inference from the language and the facts of the New Testament, nor by any practice for, at least, the first two centuries from the birth of Christ—whence is it derived? Perhaps it may be found in the pages of the Old Testament. But is it not extremely painful, to be forced back into the old economy to discover an ordinance which belongs only to the new dispensation? Yet this is the chief hold, and the main strength by which the right of infants to baptism is upheld. We are referred to the Abrahamic covenant, called the covenant of Grace.

The author of the Sermon already referred to, speaks of the covenant of Grace, and shows that its blessings "were evidently not Canaan, nor mere national peculiarities, and privileges, but spiritual blessings to be diffused among all nations. The Jew and the Gentile were referred to the same covenant as the charter of all their privileges in the church of God." And he adds, "*This covenant included children.*" (p. 12.) Now for the proof. He refers us to Gen. 17: 7. "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations." But did he read the verse following: "And I will give unto thee, and to *thy seed after thee*, the land wherein thou art a stranger, *all the land of Canaan* for an everlasting possession." And when he read this verse did he recollect what he had just said." The blessings granted in this promise, *were evidently not Canaan?*" Had he forgotten that he was speaking of the covenant of Grace, that he described children as being included in this covenant, and then to prove that *children* were in the *covenant of grace*, refers us to an account of the *covenant of Circumcision and temporal blessings?*

The promise of spiritual blessings did not respect natural offspring:—but to understand this, we must attend to illustrations which are found in the New Testament. Paul to the Romans says, "The promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect." Now, this explanation is worth all the learned writings we have ever seen on the covenant of grace. This is plain to a common reader. But their writings require *learned men* to understand them.

It was to no purpose that the false teachers among the Galatians, maintained their relation to Abraham; for when the promise was made, that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed, his natural offspring, as such, were not intended to be embraced in it, but only those who, like their father, were inheritors of the promise through faith.—Hence the Apostle says, "Know ye, therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."

If a covenant between two parties be completely confirmed, by the forms which the civil law prescribes, it is protected by that law, and no man can add or erase a single word with impunity.

Now the promise was made to Abraham and his seed.—“He saith not, and to seeds as of many,” not extending it to a number of seeds that might issue from him, “but as of one and thy seed which is Christ”—that is, in thee, and thy seed which is Christ, all the nations of the earth, through faith shall be blessed.

No subsequent transaction can affect this covenant.

Now this covenant is the same with that of circumcision instituted 24 years later, or it is not. If it be the same, why does the one refer its blessings to the spiritual and the other to the natural seed of Abraham? Here is a broad distinction, which rejects identity altogether. But let it be carefully observed that the children of Gentiles, as such, have no interest in either. For if the one were made with Abraham and his seed by faith, children not capable of exercising faith can have no claim upon it. And if the other were made with Abraham and his natural offspring, Gentiles cannot obtain a name or a place among them. We may therefore with perfect safety give up these covenants. They have no more connexion with the baptism of children than has the Constitution of England.

Another argument has been taken from the circumcision of Jewish children. The steps in this argument are extremely tedious. In the first place, it is necessary to establish the position, that the Jewish church and the Gospel church, are the same. And this is to be established by assertion. Not one sentence of proof can be derived from the revelation of God; and certainly none can be found in the character of the two institutions. Their materials, their scope, their duties, their government, their officers, are entirely different.

Admitting, however, that by some strange process of reasoning a number of persons might ultimately become so confused as to suppose that they had discovered a perfect identity, it would avail them nothing. Great and important changes have occurred,—changes which none but divine authority could sanction. No man has a right to alter the church of God in a single point. The hand that should attempt to change it, would be deemed sacrilegious. Those, therefore, who contend for this identity in the two institutions are under solemn obligations to circumcise their male children on the eighth day, unless they can show from the sacred word that this rite is abolished, and if this can be es-

tablished, they dare not substitute any thing in its place, for which they have not equal authority. Of course, they are obliged to take another step in the process, and assert that baptism has come in the room of circumcision. But where is the proof?

1. It is said that circumcision was a token of the covenant of grace between God and his church.

This is a serious mistake. The expressions employed by the Lord were these, "And it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you." A token of what? Let the Apostle Paul reply: "Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision or uncircumcision? Not in circumcision but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet been uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised." It was not a seal put upon Abraham as a believer, but a seal of the righteousness of that faith which he had before, that he might be the father of all them that believe. It exhibited throughout all their generations the fact, that "to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

2. It is said that circumcision was the initiatory seal of the covenant of grace. What! *initiatory* seal! Twenty four years after the covenant was made!!! But the Apostle's illustration of this rite is sufficient, and we leave our Pedobaptist friends to contend with him.

We have not by all this process advanced a single step towards infant baptism. Should we, however, from a feeling of sympathy admit that circumcision was a token of the covenant between God and his church—or, an initiatory seal, it would not relieve our friends from their unhappy situation, for baptism is neither; and it must be proved to be one or the other, or both, before any argument for the substitution can be exhibited. Baptism, according to the Scriptures, implies our pollution and guilt, and hence is called the baptism of repentance. By baptism a belief in Christ's death and resurrection is avowed, and a solemn determination evinced to the

world, on the part of the candidate, to die to sin, and rise to a life of holiness. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."

If baptism came in the place of circumcision, the disciples of our Lord must have known it. And if they knew it, why did they not intimate as much to those Jewish converts, who insisted that their children must be circumcised. The elders of Jerusalem said, "As touching the Gentiles, which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing." But no effort was made to soften this measure by saying, "You know that baptism has come in the stead of circumcision, and your children have been baptized. This answers the same purpose."

This fact amounts almost to demonstration.

If this substitution were fairly proved, another step must still be taken before children can be admitted to baptism. It must be shown that they are not excluded by the requirement of faith under the new economy, as a pre-requisite to baptism—but that they are entitled to the benefit of the ordinance, from the circumstance of their being the same kind of subjects as those upon whom circumcision was performed; and then, as a necessary consequence, female children must be put out of the case.

It is certainly a favorable indication that infant baptism has no support from Scripture, when a recent writer has taken a ground that belongs neither to the old economy nor to the new, in order to support it. Speaking of the import of infant baptism, he says, "It is the seal of a covenant betwixt God and the parent. It binds the Deity to fulfil his promises and binds the parent to fulfil his engagements"

For the honour of God, of the sacred writings, and our Pedobaptist friends themselves, it is to be hoped, that infant baptism has but few such advocates.

Look at it, Christian reader! Has it come to *this*? O turn your feet unto the testimonies of the Lord, and learn wisdom there. Beware lest you make the commandments of God of none effect, through your traditions.

But were it established beyond the shadow of a doubt that the children of the pious are in covenant relation; that the Jewish and Gospel churches are one; that baptism has come in the place of circumcision, and that therefore children

of believers ought to be baptized, it would lead to a result unquestionably fatal to their schemes, upon their own principles, and in view of their own practices.

It would lead to *infant communion*, contrary alike to their principles and their practices. Why are their children excluded from the privileges of the church? Why are they refused the Lord's supper? Children under the law ate of the passover. Will it be said that faith was not required of those who partook of the passover; for it is not written, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat;" this is required of all who share the Lord's supper. We grant the force of the argument against infant communion; but it bears with equal force against infant baptism. Infants under the law were circumcised, but faith was not required, for it was never said, "If thou *believest* thou mayest," which is required of those who are to be baptized.

Will it be urged that it can do a senseless child no good to partake of the Lord's supper without knowing its meaning? What good then can it do a senseless child to be baptized without a knowledge of its meaning?

Take the argument which Dr. Dwight employs, for he has but one. He says, "Paul has expressly forbidden believers to hold religious communion with unbelievers, and, by unavoidable consequence, has forbidden unbelievers to commune at the table of Christ."

This argument is equally good against their baptism.—When the Eunuch requested immersion, Philip said unto him, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." By unavoidable consequence, if he had not believed, he could have had no right to the ordinance. Therefore unbelievers have no claim to baptism, and of necessity children are excluded from this rite, as they are from communion at the table of Christ, because they are unbelievers.

Dr. W—— says, "No Jew ever objected to christianity on the ground of children being excluded from the promise.—From the time of Abraham till the day of Pentecost, the pious Israelites and devout Gentiles who embraced the faith of Abraham, held in their hands that covenant which embosomed with themselves, their children in the church of God. If then the Apostles, under the new order of things, had excluded the children of believers from the church, would no one have objected?"

Passing by the assertions of this paragraph, which are all gratuitous, we shall merely apply the argument, if it can be called one, to the subject of *infant communion*.

No Jew ever objected to christianity on the ground of children's being excluded from the promise. If the Apostles, under the new order of things had excluded the children of believers from *the privileges of the church*, in which they had been interested from the time of Abraham till the day of Pentecost;—I say, if the Apostles had excluded the children of believers from the privileges of the church, and particularly from the Lord's supper, which it is said came in the room of the Passover—would no one have objected? If this argument therefore could prove that the children of believers were sprinkled, it would just as conclusively prove that they partook of the Lord's supper.

When infant sprinkling crept into the church, infant communion came with it. Cyprian, Jerome, Austin, and Pope Innocent, were strenuous advocates for the latter, deeming them both of equal importance. Infant communion prevailed in the Latin church for several centuries, and in the Greek Church is practiced to the present day.—And the testimony of the Fathers for infant communion is just as strong, and as early as their testimony for infant sprinkling. Why has it been abandoned? Why have not these little members of the church been permitted the privileges of the church! If they behave unruly as they grow up why are they not disciplined by the church?

We will engage to turn every argument that can be employed against Infant communion, directly against infant sprinkling. We will make them stare each other in the face till they blush for shame. The time is not far distant when both will be admitted or both rejected—and if the latter does not occur, dark ages must again overspread the church of God.

This is not a subject which may be trifled with. Baptism is an institution of divine appointment; and no man who professes to be a christian can refuse to examine the subject seriously and prayerfully, without subjecting himself to the charge of disrespect for the authority of Christ. We call upon all christians, Baptists as well as others, to review the ground they have gone over, to examine thoroughly the word of God for themselves, and then to adopt in practice what they learn.

Let none call us bigoted, *and all for the water*, because we desire to know the mind of Christ on this subject. Let not those who differ from us become offended, and feel as though their church dignity was assailed. We all profess to be christians, and we ought to consider that our *religion* is interested in the proper discussion of all topics that relate to Christ's kingdom, and in the restoration of primitive practice.

As the religion of Jesus Christ lays high claims to purity, Baptism is an appropriate institution. It represents the putting away of sin. It is a burial as it were to sin, and a resurrection to a life of holiness. But, that it is the *evidence* to the believer that his sins are forgiven; or, that, his sins are remitted or washed away by this act, we do not believe.

This ordinance is in no part of the divine word associated with the forgiveness of sins, unless it be supposed to be thus associated in one single passage where Peter, on the day of Pentecost, addressing enquirers says, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." This passage has been urged. To this, three observations may be offered.

1. The passage is capable of transposition. "Repent every one of you, for the remissions of sins, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." This precisely corresponds with other places, where remission of sins is immediately connected with repentance, and not with baptism.

2. But should this transposition be opposed, the passage is capable of a different rendering. Instead of saying "*for the remission of sins*," we might read it—"to the *relinquishment, or putting away of sin*."

And this translation would agree precisely with the fact; for by our baptism we profess to put away sin and to live a new life. And more than this, it would accord with the primitive and ordinary meaning of the word.

3. The language of Peter is, to say the least, doubtful, as it stands in our translation, and therefore, ought not to be made the proof of a foundation principle in religion. As a *direct proof*, in the absence of corroborating testimony, it must be set aside.

If *repentance* and *remission of sins* are associated in other places, (and this is the fact) the most that the words of Peter could be employed for, would be to stand as collateral testi-

mony to this fact. But it may be asked—Is not baptism said to save us in the passage, “The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us?”

“*The like figure,*” must be understood in one of two ways. First, That the Ark which was safely carried through the water, while all the disobedient perished, was a figure of the salvation of men through Jesus Christ, the great Ark of spiritual safety; and that the ordinance of baptism, being by immersion in water, is also a figure of the same kind, a figure of our salvation through Christ, as representing emblematically his death and burial for our offences, and his resurrection for our justification. And certainly as an emblem, it is highly significant. This interpretation the Apostle justifies, in his closing words—“The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us, *by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*”

Or, Secondly, The expressions may not suppose any emblem of salvation through Christ in the Ark, but merely contain a *fact*, that baptism is a figure of our salvation by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Taken either way, it can be no more than a *figure*. But a figure cannot save us, or forgive our sins, for the emblem and the thing signified by that emblem can never be identified. The Apostle has been careful to guard this point from abuse by saying, “*not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.*”

But did not Ananias say to Paul, “Arise and be baptized and *wash away thy sins?*” “This language is either literal or metaphorical, and we are willing that either horn of the dilemma shall be taken. If it is literal, then sins are something external and tangible, which water can wash off in the same way that defilement may be washed away from the body. But here is a manifest absurdity which the greatest idiot in the world can perceive. If the language is metaphorical, then baptism is *merely emblematic* of our putting away sin, and living a new life. Now the emblem and the thing signified by that emblem, can never be identified, and hence the forgiveness of sins in the act of baptism is out of the question. This is an argument which any man may cavil at, but to meet it and overthrow it, is impossible.

On the subject of baptism there are two extremes against which we should guard. One is, *to make more* of the ordinance than the word of God does, and the other is *to make*

less of it. • How often persons are heard to say, "*Water is nothing—baptism is not essential to salvation.*"

This results either from a trifling mind, or from ignorance. The Society of Friends adopt this view, but they do it in a *serious* spirit, and they act consistently with their own convictions, for, as they esteem water *nothing*, they have *nothing at all to do with it*.

Have we seriously and prayerfully investigated this subject for ourselves? If we have not, are our hearts right in the sight of God? Are we coming to the light that our deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God? If we turn away our ear from hearing the law, will not all our services and all our prayers be an abomination to God? If our ignorance on this subject arise from the fact that we have never thoroughly examined it, in the fear of God, is not our ignorance a guilty ignorance? If we are convinced that we are wrong, and yet with this conviction live in the neglect of our duty, can we expect the blessing of heaven? Let us listen to the language of Christ, "He that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them *not*, I will liken him unto a foolish man that built his house on the sand."

"Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

With a few observations upon the subject of *close communion*, I shall drop my pen, and commit the whole to the blessing of my Master.

The Baptists have been repeatedly charged with *bigotry* in not permitting persons of other denominations to partake with them at the Lord's Table. All we ask is, that liberty of conscience may be granted to us without the mixture of abuse. The argument for close communion is a very short one, and as conclusive as any demonstration in Euclid.

No person has a right to the Lord's supper, who has not been baptized:—No person is baptized according to the gospel unless he has been *immersed*. Therefore, no person, who has not been *immersed*, has a right to the Lord's supper. The conclusion can be overthrown only by denying the premises. If any man denies the premises, and says that he has a right to the Lord's Supper before baptism, he must go to those who are willing to grant him the exercise of this right. The Congregationalist will not—The Presbyterians will not—The Episcopalians will not. If he says that a person is baptized

according to the gospel when he is sprinkled, then let him be quite sure that he is right; and when he is sure, then let him learn not to molest us; for his opinions are not the rule of our conduct.

This noise about close communion is all an idle wind. It is just as ridiculous as to throw the origin of the Baptists upon the mad men of Munster. A Baptist, who believes that the authority of Jesus Christ, and the practice of the primitive church, require baptism as a pre-requisite to the Lord's Supper, and that nothing is *baptism*, but *immersion*, violates his own conscience if he walk in church fellowship with those who depart from the primitive plan. To ask him to hold *open communion*, is to ask him to violate his conscience. Let Pedobaptists be immersed upon a profession of their faith. They believe that *immersion* is baptism, and therefore to be immersed would not violate their consciences. Who ought to yield upon common principles of justice and charity? Those who by yielding would sacrifice conscience, or those who could yield without such a sacrifice? We desire to see all christians walking in fellowship and communion upon scriptural principles; but we throw back the barrier upon others. They have shut the door against us by departing from primitive practice. Let them fling wide open the doors; let them come back to first principles. We are ready to close in upon the overtures of the gospel.

If it be said that Jesus Christ receives them, and that therefore we ought to do it, we reply that we will do this whenever the Lord Jesus places the legislative power in our hands. We are his servants, and must obey his laws as we understand them. We have no right to add or to alter. The Lord Jesus can do as he pleases in receiving sinners, but we must do as he commands.

I deem it the highest honor to stand by the side of those whose fathers were persecuted and banished in the East, and imprisoned in the South.—They advocate the Institutions of Christ in their primitive form, and I believe they will prevail. Truth is omnipotent, and will yet come forth from the furnace as gold refined. I love all who bear the image of Jesus Christ, but I love Christ more. I value his laws far above the traditions of men and churches. And now O Saviour, King in Zion, purge out the old leaven, purify thy church, cause thy face to shine upon us, and we shall be saved!



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